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THE LADY OF THE LAKE



by SCOTT

Edited by L. Du P. Syle



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Sir H. Raeburn

Walter Scott

1771-1832

Heath's English Classics

SCOTT'S
LADY OF THE LAKE

EDITED WITH NOTES
DESCRIPTIVE AND APPRECIATIVE

BY

L. DUPONT SYLE, M.A. (YALE)

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE IN
THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

•
"The most interesting, romantic, picturesque and
graceful of [Scott's] greater poems."—*Lockhart*.

BOSTON, U. S. A.
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1909

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TO

E. D. HULBERT

**A REFUGE AND STRENGTH UNTO HIS FRIENDS, AND
A VERY PRESENT HELP IN TIME OF TROUBLE**





EDITOR'S FOREWORD TO TEACHERS.

MY DEAR FRIENDS :

I have watched a great many young people studying annotated editions of this poem : never a one have I seen look at a Preface. These remarks, therefore, I address to you.

In order to teach *THE LADY OF THE LAKE* properly, one should be familiar with the following books, all of which are easily accessible :

The Journal of Sir Walter Scott (1825-1832). This gives an insight into the personality of the author such as can be obtained from no other work.

Lockhart's Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott. Lockhart was himself a literary man of no mean pretensions ; he married Scott's daughter and lived on terms of intimacy with Scott himself. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that he has written one of the best biographies in English. In chapters xix and xx may be found an account of the composition and publication of *THE LADY OF THE LAKE*.

Hutton's Life of Sir Walter Scott : English Men of Letters Series. If one has not time to read Lockhart's ten volumes, he will find this a good abridgment, with some excellent original criticism.

Scott's Tales of a Grandfather : chapters i-xxviii. This is the History of Scotland, down to the death of James V. Antiquarians tell us that this History contains inaccuracies, but they are not such as one needs to lose any rest over and the style is such as even antiquarians cannot help reading with interest.

Beers' History of Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century. Chapter i (The Subject Defined) and chapter viii (Percy and the Ballads).

Beers' History of Romanticism in the Nineteenth Century. Chapter i.

In preparing the notes for this edition, I have given help only

where it was necessary to keep the pupil from going astray. Thus, a boy of fifteen could not reasonably be expected to interpret *cumber* as meaning *difficulty*, or *purvey* as meaning *provide*. These are poetical usages, in the interpretation of which he ought to have help before he is called upon to recite. He should not have help, it seems to me, for the meanings of words which, though new perhaps to him, are used in their ordinary prose sense. To interpret these for him would be to reprint the Dictionary for his benefit and to make him idle.

This poem is unintelligible without a map and the publishers have supplied an unusually good one. In the case of geographical names, then, the notes pretend to do nothing more than give the pupil a hint as to what part of the map he should search.

As to metre, my experience is that young people get very little illumination from printed analyses of Spenserian stanzas or of lines trochaic and anapaestic. Such matters are interesting to them only when explained orally, accompanied by good reading (on the part of the teacher) of spirited passages and by plentiful use of chalk and blackboard. *Gummere's Hand Book of Poetics* is the best book I know of on this subject.

L. DUPONT SYLE

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REIGN AND CHARACTER OF JAMES V, THE HERO OF THIS POEM

[From Scott's "Tales of a Grandfather," chs. xxvi-xxviii.]

Angus's Accession to the Government — Buccleuch and Lennox — Escape of James — Banishment of Angus, and the rest of the Douglasses. —

1524-1528.

QUEEN MARGARET, who hated her husband Angus, as I have told you, now combined with his enemy Arran, to call James V., her son (though then only twelve years old), to the management of the public affairs ; but the Earl of Angus, returning at this crisis from France, speedily obtained a superiority in the Scottish councils, and became the head of those nobles who desired to maintain a friendly alliance with England rather than to continue that league with France, which had so often involved Scotland in quarrels with their powerful neighbour.

Margaret might have maintained her authority, for she was personally much beloved ; but it was the fate or the folly of that Queen to form rash marriages. Like her brother Henry of England, who tired of his wives, Margaret seems to have been addicted to tire of her husbands ; but she had not the power of cutting the heads from the spouses whom she desired to be rid of. Having obtained a divorce from Angus, she married a young man of little power and inferior rank, named Henry Stewart, a younger son of Lord Evandale. She lost her influence by that ill-advised measure. Angus, therefore, rose to the supreme authority in Scotland, obtained possession of the person of the King, transacted every thing in the name of James, but by his own authority, and became in all respects the Regent of Scotland, though without assuming the name.

The talents of the Earl of Angus were equal to the charge he had assumed, and as he reconciled himself to his old rival the Earl of Arran, his power seemed founded on a sure basis.

He was able to accomplish a treaty of peace with England, which was of great advantage to the kingdom. But, according to the fashion of the times, Angus was much too desirous to confer all the great offices, lands, and other advantages in the disposal of the crown, upon his own friends and adherents, to the exclusion of all the nobles and gentry, who had either taken part against him in the late struggle for power, or were not decidedly his partisans. The course of justice also was shamefully perverted, by the partiality of Angus for his friends, kinsmen, and adherents.

An old historian says, "That there dared no man strive at law with a Douglas, or yet with the adherent of a Douglas; for if he did, he was sure to get the worst of his law-suit. And," he adds, "although Angus travelled through the country under the pretence of punishing thieves, robbers, and murderers, there were no malefactors so great as those which rode in his own company."

The King, who was now fourteen years old, became disgusted with the sort of restraint in which Angus detained him, and desirous to free himself from his tutelage. His mother had doubtless a natural influence over him, and that likewise was exerted to the Earl's prejudice. The Earl of Lennox, a wise and intelligent nobleman, near in blood to the King, was also active in fostering his displeasure against the Douglasses, and schemes began to be agitated for taking the person of the King out of the hands of Angus. But Angus was so well established in the government, that his authority could not be destroyed except by military force; and it was not easy to bring such to bear against one so powerful, and of such a martial character.

At length it seems to have been determined to employ the agency of Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, a man of great courage and military talent, head of a numerous and powerful clan, and possessed of much influence on the Border. He had been once the friend of Angus, and had even scaled the walls of Edinburgh with a great body of his clan, in order to render the party of the Earl uppermost in that city. But of late he had attached himself to Lennox, by whose counsel he seems to have been guided in the enterprise which I am about to give you an account of.

Some excesses had taken place on the Border, probably by the connivance of Buccleuch, which induced Angus to march to Jedburgh, bringing the King in his company, lest he should have made his escape during his absence. He was joined by the clans of Home and Ker, both in league with him, and he had, besides, a considerable body of chosen attendants. Angus was returning from this expedition, and had passed the night at Melrose. The Kers and Homes had taken leave of the Earl, who with the King and his retinue had left Melrose, when a band of a thousand horsemen suddenly appeared on the side of an eminence called Halidon-hill, and, descending into the valley, interposed between the Earl and the bridge, by which he must pass the Tweed on his return northward.

“Sir,” said Angus to the King, “yonder comes Buccleuch, with the Border thieves of Teviotdale and Liddesdale, to interrupt your Grace’s passage. I vow to God they shall either fight or fly. You shall halt upon this knoll with my brother George, while we drive off these banditti, and clear the road for your Grace.”

The King made no answer, for in his heart he desired that Buccleuch’s undertaking might be successful ; but he dared not say so.

Angus, mean time, despatched a herald to charge Buccleuch to withdraw with his forces. Scott replied, “that he was come, according to the custom of the Borders, to show the King his clan and followers, and invite his Grace to dine at his house.” To which he added, “that he knew the King’s mind as well as Angus.” The Earl advanced, and the Borderers, shouting their war-cry of Bellenden, immediately joined battle, and fought stoutly ; but the Homes and Kers, who were at no great distance, returned on hearing the alarm, and coming through the little village of Darnick, set upon Buccleuch’s men and decided the fate of the day. The Border riders fled, but Buccleuch and his followers fought bravely in their retreat, and turning upon the Kers, slew several of them ; in particular, Ker of Cessford, a chief of the name, who was killed by the lance of one of the Elliots, a retainer of Buccleuch. His death occasioned a deadly feud between the clans of Scott and Ker,

which lasted for a century, and cost much blood. This skirmish took place on the 25th of July, 1526. About eighty Scotts were slain on the field of battle, and a sentence was pronounced against Buccleuch and many of his clan, as guilty of high treason. But after the King had shaken off the yoke of the Douglasses, he went in person to Parliament to obtain the restoration of Buccleuch, who, he declared on his kingly word, had come to Melrose without any purpose of quarrel, but merely to pay his duty to his prince, and show him the number of his followers. In evidence of which the King affirmed that the said Wat was not clad in armour, but in a leathern coat (a buff-coat, I suppose), with a black bonnet on his head. The family were restored to their estates accordingly; but Sir Walter Scott was long afterwards murdered by the Kers, at Edinburgh, in revenge of the death of the Laird of Cessford.

The Earl of Lennox being disappointed in procuring the King's release by means of Buccleuch, now resolved to attempt it in person. He received much encouragement from the Chancellor Beaton (distinguished at the skirmish called Cleanthe-Causeway), from the Earl of Glencairn, and other noblemen, who saw with displeasure the Earl of Angus keeping the young King under restraint, and that all the administration of the kingdom centered in the Douglasses. Lennox assembled an army of ten or twelve thousand men, and advanced upon Edinburgh from Stirling. Angus and Arran, who were still closely leagued together, encountered Lennox, with an inferior force, near the village of Newliston. The rumour that a battle was about to commence soon reached Edinburgh, when Sir George Douglas hastened to call out the citizens in arms, to support his brother, the Earl of Angus. The city bells were rung, trumpets were sounded, and the King himself was obliged to mount on horseback, to give countenance to the measures of the Douglasses, whom in his soul he detested. James was so sensible of his situation, that he tried, by every means in his power, to delay the march of the forces which were mustered at Edinburgh. When they reached the village of Corstorphine, they heard the thunder of the guns; which

inflamed the fierce impatience of George Douglas to reach the field of battle, and also increased the delays of the young King, who was in hopes Angus might be defeated before his brother could come up. Douglas, perceiving this, addressed the King in language which James never forgot nor forgave ; — “ Your Grace need not think to escape us,” said this fierce warrior ; “ if our enemies had hold of you on one side, and we on the other, we would tear you to pieces ere we would let you go.”

Tidings now came from the field of battle that Lennox had been defeated, and that Angus had gained the victory. The young King, dismayed at the news, now urged his attendants to gallop forward, as much as he had formerly desired them to hang back. He charged them to prevent slaughter, and save lives, especially that of Lennox. Sir Andrew Wood, one of the King’s cup-bearers, arrived in the field of battle time enough to save the Earl of Glencairn, who, protected by some strong ground, was still fighting gallantly, though he had scarce thirty men left alive ; and Wood contrived to convey him safe out of the field. But Lennox, about whose safety the King was so anxious, was already no more. He had been slain, in cold blood, by that bloodthirsty man, Sir James Hamilton of Draphane, who took him from the Laird of Pardivan, to whom he had surrendered himself. This deed seemed to flow from the brutal nature of the perpetrator, who took such a pleasure in shedding blood, that he slashed with his own hand the faces of many of the prisoners. Arran, the father of this ferocious man, bitterly lamented the fate of Lennox, who was his nephew. He was found mourning beside the body, over which he had spread his scarlet cloak. “ The hardest, stoutest, and wisest man that Scotland bore,” he said, “ lies here slain.”

After these two victories, the Earl of Angus seemed to be so firmly established in power, that his followers set no bounds to their presumption, and his enemies were obliged to fly and hide themselves. Chancellor Beaton, disguised as a shepherd, fed sheep on Bogrian-knowe, until he made his peace with the Earls of Angus and Arran, by great gifts, both in money and in church lands. Angus established around the King’s person a

guard of a hundred men of his own choice, commanded by Douglas of Parkhead; he made his brother George, whom James detested, Master of the Royal Household; and Archibald of Kilspindie, his uncle, Lord Treasurer of the Realm. But the close restraint in which the King found himself, only increased his eager desire to be rid of all the Douglasses together. Force having failed in two instances, James had recourse to stratagem.

He prevailed on his mother, Queen Margaret, to yield up to him the castle of Stirling, which was her jointure-house, and secretly to put it into the hands of a governor whom he could trust. This was done with much caution. Thus prepared with a place of refuge, James watched with anxiety an opportunity of flying to it; and he conducted himself with such apparent confidence toward Angus, that the Douglasses were lulled into security, and concluded that the King was reconciled to his state of bondage, and had despaired of making his escape.

James was then residing at Falkland, a royal palace conveniently situated for hunting and hawking, in which he seemed to take great pleasure. The Earl of Angus at this period left the court for Lothian, where he had some urgent business — Archibald Douglas of Kilspindie went to Dundee, to visit a lady to whom he was attached — and George Douglas had gone to St. Andrews, to extort some farther advantages from Chancellor Beaton, who was now archbishop of that see, and primate of Scotland. There was thus none of the Douglasses left about the King's person, except Parkhead, with his guard of one hundred men, in whose vigilance the others confided.

The King thought the time favourable for his escape. To lay all suspicion asleep, he pretended he was to rise next morning at an early hour, for the purpose of hunting the stag. Douglas of Parkhead, suspecting nothing, retired to bed after placing his watch. But the King was no sooner in his private chamber, than he called a trusty page, named John Hart: — "Jockie," said he, "dost thou love me?"

"Better than myself," answered the domestic.

"And will you risk any thing for me?"

"My life, with pleasure," said John Hart.

The King then explained his purpose, and dressing himself

in the attire of a groom, he went with Hart to the stable, as if for the purpose of getting the horses ready for the next day's hunt. The guards, deceived by their appearance, gave them no interruption. At the stables three good horses were saddled and in readiness, under charge of a yeoman, or groom, whom the King had entrusted with his design.

James mounted with his two servants, and galloped, during the whole night, as eager as a bird just escaped from July, a cage. At daylight he reached the bridge of Stir- 1528. ling, which was the only mode of passing the river Forth, except by boats. It was defended by gates, which the King, after passing through them, ordered to be closed, and directed the passage to be watched. He was a weary man when he reached Stirling castle, where he was joyfully received by the governor, whom his mother had placed in that strong fortress. The drawbridges were raised, the portcullises dropt, guards set, and every measure of defence and precaution resorted to. But the King was so much afraid of again falling into the hands of the Douglasses, that, tired as he was, he would not go to sleep until the keys of the castle were placed in his own keeping, and laid underneath his pillow.

In the morning there was great alarm at Falkland. Sir George Douglas had returned thither, on the night of the King's departure, about eleven o'clock. On his arrival, he enquired after the King, and was answered by the porter as well as the watchmen upon guard, that he was sleeping in his chamber, as he intended to hunt early in the morning. Sir George therefore retired to rest in full security. But the next morning he learned different tidings. One Peter Carmichael, bailie of Abernethy, knocked at the door of his chamber, and asked him if he knew "what the King was doing that morning?"

"He is in his chamber asleep," said Sir George.

"You are mistaken," answered Carmichael; "he passed the bridge of Stirling this last night."

On hearing this, Douglas started up in haste, went to the King's chamber, and knocked for admittance. When no answer was returned, he caused the door to be forced, and when he found the apartment empty, he cried, "Treason! — The King

is gone, and none knows whither." Then he sent post to his brother, the Earl of Angus, and despatched messengers in every direction, to seek the King, and to assemble the Douglasses.

When the truth became known, the adherents of Angus rode in a body to Stirling ; but the King was so far from desiring to receive them, that he threatened, by sound of trumpet, to declare any of the name of Douglas a traitor who should approach within twelve miles of his person, or who should presume to meddle with the administration of government. Some of the Douglasses inclined to resist this proclamation ; but the Earl of Angus and his brother resolved to obey it, and withdrew to Linlithgow.

Soon afterwards, the King assembled around him the numerous nobility, who envied the power of Angus and Arran, or had suffered injuries at their hands ; and, in open parliament, accused them of treason, declaring, that he had never been sure of his life all the while that he was in their power. A sentence of forfeiture was, therefore, passed against the Earl of Angus, and he was driven into exile, with all his friends and kinsmen. And thus the Red Douglasses, of the house of Angus, shared almost the same fate with the Black Douglasses, of the elder branch of that mighty house ; with this difference, that as they had never risen so high, so they did not fall so irretrievably ; for the Earl of Angus lived to return and enjoy his estates in Scotland, where he again played a distinguished part. But this was not till after the death of James V., who retained, during his whole life, an implacable resentment against the Douglasses, and never permitted one of the name to settle in Scotland while he lived.

James persevered in this resolution even under circumstances which rendered his unrelenting resentment ungenerous. Archibald Douglas of Kilspindie, the Earl of Angus's uncle, had been a personal favourite of the King before the disgrace of his family. He was so much recommended to James by his great strength, manly appearance, and skill in every kind of warlike exercise, that he was wont to call him his Graysteil, after the name of a champion in a romance then popular. Archibald, becoming rather an old man, and tired of his exile in England, resolved to try the King's mercy. He thought that as they had been so

well acquainted formerly, and as he had never offended James personally, he might find favour from their old intimacy. He therefore threw himself in the King's way one day as he returned from hunting in the park at Stirling. It was several years since James had seen him, but he knew him at a great distance, by his firm and stately step, and said, "Yonder is my Graysteil, Archibald of Kilspindie." But when they met, he showed no appearance of recognizing his old servant. Douglas turned, and still hoping to obtain a glance of favourable recollection, ran along by the King's side; and although James trotted his horse hard against the hill, and Douglas wore a heavy shirt of mail under his clothes, for fear of assassination, yet Graysteil was at the castle gate as soon as the King. James passed him, and entered the castle; but Douglas, exhausted with exertion, sat down at the gate and asked for a cup of wine. The hatred of the King against the name of Douglas was so well known, that no domestic about the court dared procure for the old warrior even this trifling refreshment. The King blamed, indeed, his servants for their discourtesy, and even said, that but for his oath never to employ a Douglas, he would have received Archibald of Kilspindie into his service, as he had formerly known him a man of great ability. Yet he sent his commands to his poor Graysteil to retire to France, where he died heart-broken soon afterwards. Even Henry VIII. of England, himself of an unforgiving temper, blamed the implacability of James on this occasion, and quoted an old proverb, —

"A King's face
Should give grace."

Character of James V. — His Expedition to punish the Border Freebooters — His Adventures — Rustic Hunting Palace in Athole — Institution of the College of Justice — Gold Mines of Scotland. 1528–1540.

Freed from the stern control of the Douglas family, James V. now began to exercise the government in person, and displayed most of the qualities of a wise and good prince. He was handsome in his person, and resembled his father in the fondness for military exercises, and the spirit of chivalrous honour which

James IV. loved to display. He also inherited his father's love of justice, and his desire to establish and enforce wise and equal laws, which should protect the weak against the oppression of the great. It was easy enough to make laws, but to put them in vigorous exercise was of much greater difficulty; and in his attempt to accomplish this laudable purpose, James often incurred the ill-will of the more powerful nobles. He was a well-educated and accomplished man; and like his ancestor, James I., was a poet and a musician. He had, however, his defects. He avoided his father's failing of profusion, having no hoarded treasures to employ on pomp and show; but he rather fell into the opposite fault, being of a temper too parsimonious; and though he loved state and display, he endeavoured to gratify that taste as economically as possible, so that he has been censured as rather close and covetous. He was also, though the foibles seem inconsistent, fond of pleasure, and disposed to too much indulgence. It must be added, that when provoked, he was unrelenting even to cruelty; for which he had some apology, considering the ferocity of the subjects over whom he reigned. But, on the whole, James V. was an amiable man, and a good sovereign.

His first care was to bring the Borders of Scotland to some degree of order. These, as you were formerly told, were inhabited by tribes of men, forming each a different clan, May, 1529. as they were called, and obeying no orders, save those which were given by their chiefs. These chiefs were supposed to represent the first founder of the name, or family. The attachment of the clansmen to the chief was very great: indeed, they paid respect to no one else. In this the Borderers agreed with the Highlanders, as also in their love of plunder, and neglect of the general laws of the country. But the Border men wore no tartan dress, and served almost always on horseback, whereas the Highlanders acted always on foot. You will also remember that the Borderers spoke the Scottish language, and not the Gaelic tongue used by the mountaineers.

The situation of these clans on the frontiers exposed them to constant war; so that they thought of nothing else but of collecting bands of their followers together, and making incursions,

without much distinction, on the English, on the Lowland (or inland) Scots, or upon each other. They paid little respect either to times of truce or treaties of peace, but exercised their depredations without regard to either, and often occasioned wars betwixt England and Scotland which would not otherwise have taken place.

It is said of a considerable family on the Borders, that when they had consumed all the cattle about the castle, a pair of spurs was placed on the table in a covered dish, as a hint that they must ride out and fetch more. The chiefs and leading men told down their daughters' portions according to the plunder which they were able to collect in the course of a Michaelmas moon, when its prolonged light allowed them opportunity for their free-booting excursions. They were very brave in battle, but in time of peace they were a pest to their Scottish neighbours. As their insolence had risen to a high pitch after the field of Flodden had thrown the country into confusion, James V. resolved to take very severe measures against them.

His first step was to secure the persons of the principal chieftains by whom these disorders were privately encouraged. The Earl of Bothwell, the Lord Home, Lord Maxwell, Scott of Buccleuch, Ker of Fairniehirst, and other powerful chiefs who might have opposed the King's purposes, were seized, and imprisoned in separate fortresses in the inland country.

James then assembled an army, in which warlike purposes were united with those of silvan sport; for he ordered all the gentlemen in the wild districts which he intended to visit, to bring in their best dogs, as if his only purpose had been to hunt the deer in those desolate regions. This was intended to prevent the Borderers from taking the alarm, in which case they would have retreated into their mountains and fastnesses, from whence it would have been difficult to dislodge them.

These men had indeed no distinct idea of the offences which they had committed, and consequently no apprehension of the King's displeasure against them. The laws had been so long silent in that remote and disorderly country, that the outrages which were practised by the strong against the weak seemed to

the perpetrators the natural course of society, and to present nothing that was worthy of punishment.

Thus, as the King, in the beginning of his expedition, suddenly approached the castle of Piers Cockburn of Henderland, that baron was in the act of providing a great entertainment to welcome him, when James caused him to be suddenly seized on, and executed. Adam Scott of Tushielaw, called the King of the Border, met the same fate. But an event of greater importance, was the fate of John Armstrong, of Gilnockie, near Langholm.

This freebooting chief had risen to great consequence, and the whole neighbouring district of England paid him *black mail*, that is, a sort of tribute, in consideration of which he forbore plundering them. He had a high idea of his own importance, and seems to have been unconscious of having merited any severe usage at the King's hands. On the contrary, he came to meet his sovereign at a place about ten miles from Hawick, called Carlinrigg chapel, richly dressed, and having with him twenty-four gentlemen, his constant retinue, as well attired as himself. The King, incensed to see a freebooter so gallantly equipped, commanded him instantly to be led to execution, saying, "What wants this knave, save a crown, to be as magnificent as a king?" John Armstrong made great offers for his life, offering to maintain himself, with forty men, ready to serve the King at a moment's notice, at his own expense; engaging never to hurt or injure any Scottish subject, as indeed had never been his practice; and undertaking, that there was not a man in England, of whatever degree, duke, earl, lord, or baron, but he would engage, within a short time, to present him to the King, dead or alive. But when the King would listen to none of his offers, the robber chief said, very proudly, "I am but a fool to ask grace at a graceless face; but had I guessed you would have used me thus, I would have kept the Border-side, in despite of the King of England and you both; for I well know that King Henry would give the weight of my best horse in gold to know that I am sentenced to die this day."

John Armstrong was led to execution, with all his men, and hanged without mercy. The people of the inland counties

were glad to be rid of him ; but on the Borders he was both missed and mourned, as a brave warrior, and a stout man-at-arms against England.

Such were the effects of the terror struck by these general executions, that James was said to have made "the rush bush keep the cow ;" that is to say, that even in this lawless part of the country, men dared no longer make free with property, and cattle might remain on their pastures unwatched. James was also enabled to draw profit from the lands which the crown possessed near the Borders, and is said to have had ten thousand sheep at one time grazing in Ettrick forest, under the keeping of one Andrew Bell, who gave the King as good an account of the profits of the flock as if they had been grazing in the bounds of Fife, then the most civilized part of Scotland.

On the other hand, the Borders of Scotland were greatly weakened by the destruction of so many brave men, who, notwithstanding their lawless course of life, were true defenders of their country; and there is reason to censure the extent to which James carried his severity, as being to a certain degree impolitic, and beyond doubt cruel and excessive.

In the like manner James proceeded against the Highland chiefs ; and by executions, forfeitures, and other severe measures, he brought the Northern mountaineers, as he had already done those of the South, into comparative subjection. He then set at liberty the Border chiefs, and others whom he had imprisoned, lest they should have offered any hindrance to the course of his justice.

As these fiery chieftains, after this severe chastisement, could no longer as formerly attack each other's castles and lands, they were forced to vent their deadly animosities in duels, which were frequently fought in the King's presence, his royal permission being first obtained. Thus, Douglas of Drumlanrig, and Charteris of Amisfield, did battle together in presence of the King, each having accused the other of high treason. They fought on foot with huge two-handed swords. Drumlanrig was somewhat blind, or short-sighted, and being in great fury, struck about him without seeing where he hit, and the Laird of Amisfield was not more successful, for his sword broke in the encounter ; upon

this, the King caused the battle to cease, and the combatants were with difficulty separated. Thus the King gratified these unruly barons, by permitting them to fight in his own presence, in order to induce them to remain at peace elsewhere.

James V. had a custom of going about the country disguised as a private person, in order that he might hear complaints which might not otherwise reach his ears, and perhaps, that he might enjoy amusements which he could not have partaken of in his avowed royal character. This is also said to have been a custom of James IV., his father, and several adventures are related of what befell them on such occasions. One or two of these narratives may help to enliven our story.

When James V. travelled in disguise, he used a name which was known only to some of his principal nobility and attendants. He was called the Goodman (the tenant, that is) of Ballengiech. Ballengiech is a steep pass which leads down behind the castle of Stirling. Once upon a time, when the court was feasting in Stirling, the King sent for some venison from the neighbouring hills. The deer were killed, and put on horses' backs to be transported to Stirling. Unluckily they had to pass the castle gates of Arnpryor, belonging to a chief of the Buchanans, who chanced to have a considerable number of guests with him. It was late, and the company were rather short of victuals, though they had more than enough of liquor. The chief, seeing so much fat venison passing his very door, seized on it; and to the expostulations of the keepers, who told him it belonged to King James, he answered insolently, that if James was King in Scotland, he, Buchanan, was King in Kippen; being the name of the district in which the castle of Arnpryor lay. On hearing what had happened, the King got on horseback, and rode instantly from Stirling to Buchanan's house, where he found a strong fierce-looking Highlander, with an axe on his shoulder, standing sentinel at the door. This grim warder refused the King admittance, saying, that the laird of Arnpryor was at dinner, and would not be disturbed. "Yet go up to the company, my good friend," said the King, "and tell him that the Goodman of Ballengiech is come to feast with the King of Kippen." The porter went grumbling into the house, and told his master that there was a

fellow with a red beard at the gate, who called himself the Goodman of Ballengiech, who said he was come to dine with the King of Kippen. As soon as Buchanan heard these words, he knew that the King was come in person, and hastened down to kneel at James's feet, and to ask forgiveness for his insolent behaviour. But the King, who only meant to give him a fright, forgave him freely, and, going into the castle, feasted on his own venison which Buchanan had intercepted. Buchanan of Arnprior was ever afterwards called the King of Kippen.

Upon another occasion, King James, being alone and in disguise, fell into a quarrel with some gypsies, or other vagrants, and was assaulted by four or five of them. This chanced to be very near the bridge of Cramond; so the King got on the bridge, which, as it was high and narrow, enabled him to defend himself with his sword against the number of persons by whom he was attacked. There was a poor man thrashing corn in a barn near by, who came out on hearing the noise of the scuffle, and seeing one man defending himself against numbers, gallantly took the King's part with his flail, to such good purpose, that the gypsies were obliged to fly. The husbandman then took the King into the barn, brought him a towel and water to wash the blood from his face and hands, and finally walked with him a little way towards Edinburgh, in case he should be again attacked. On the way, the King asked his companion what and who he was. The labourer answered, that his name was John Howieson, and that he was a bondsman on the farm of Braehead, near Cramond, which belonged to the King of Scotland. James then asked the poor man, if there was any wish in the world which he would particularly desire should be gratified; and honest John confessed, he should think himself the happiest man in Scotland were he but proprietor of the farm on which he wrought as a labourer. He then asked the King, in turn, who *he* was; and James replied, as usual, that he was the Goodman of Ballengiech, a poor man who had a small appointment about the palace; but he added, that if John Howieson would come to see him on the next Sunday, he would endeavour to repay his manful assistance, and, at least, give him the pleasure of seeing the royal apartments.

John put on his best clothes, as you may suppose, and appearing at a postern gate of the palace, enquired for the Goodman of Ballengiech. The King had given orders that he should be admitted; and John found his friend, the goodman, in the same disguise which he had formerly worn. The King, still preserving the character of an inferior officer of the household, conducted John Howieson from one apartment of the palace to another, and was amused with his wonder and his remarks. At length, James asked his visitor if he should like to see the King; to which John replied, nothing would delight him so much, if he could do so without giving offence. The Goodman of Ballengiech, of course, undertook that the King would not be angry. "But," said John, "how am I to know his Grace from the nobles who will be all about him?" — "Easily," replied his companion; "all the others will be uncovered — the King alone will wear his hat or bonnet."

So speaking, King James introduced the countryman into a great hall, which was filled by the nobility and officers of the crown. John was a little frightened, and drew close to his attendant; but was still unable to distinguish the King. "I told you that you should know him by his wearing his hat," said the conductor. "Then," said John, after he had again looked round the room, "it must be either you or me, for all but us two are bare-headed."

The King laughed at John's fancy; and that the good yeoman might have occasion for mirth also, he made him a present of the farm of Braehead, which he had wished so much to possess, on condition that John Howieson, or his successors, should be ready to present a ewer and basin for the King to wash his hands, when his Majesty should come to Holyrood palace, or should pass the bridge of Cramond. Accordingly, in the year 1822, when George IV. came to Scotland, the descendant¹ of John Howieson of Braehead, who still possesses the estate which was given to his ancestor, appeared at a solemn festival, and offered his Majesty water from a silver ewer, that he might perform the service by which he held his lands.

James V. was very fond of hunting, and, when he pursued

¹ William Howieson Crawford, Esq. of Braehead and Crawford-land.

that amusement in the Highlands, he used to wear the peculiar dress of that country, having a long and wide Highland shirt, and a jacket of tartan velvet, with plaid hose, and every thing else corresponding. The accounts for these are in the books of his chamberlain, still preserved.

On one occasion, when the King had an ambassador of the Pope along with him, with various foreigners of distinction, they were splendidly entertained by the Earl of ¹⁵³³.

Athole in a huge and singular rustic palace. It was built of timber, in the midst of a great meadow, and surrounded by moats, or fosses, full of the most delicate fish. It was enclosed and defended by towers, as if it had been a regular castle, and had within it many apartments, which were decked with flowers and branches, so that in treading them one seemed to be in a garden. Here were all kinds of game, and other provisions in abundance, with many cooks to make them ready, and plenty of the most costly spices and wines. The Italian ambassador was greatly surprised to see, amongst rocks and wildernesses, which seemed to be the very extremity of the world, such good lodging and so magnificent an entertainment. But what surprised him most of all, was to see the Highlanders set fire to the wooden castle as soon as the hunting was over, and the King in the act of departing. "Such is the constant practice of our Highlanders," said James to the ambassador; "however well they may be lodged over night, they always burn their lodging before they leave it." By this the King intimated the predatory and lawless habits displayed by these mountaineers.

The reign of James V. was not alone distinguished by his personal adventures and pastimes, but is honourably remembered on account of wise laws made for the government of his people, and for restraining the crimes and violence which were frequently practised among them; especially those of assassination, burning of houses, and driving of cattle, the usual and ready means by which powerful chiefs avenged themselves of their feudal enemies.

For the decision of civil questions, James V. invented and instituted what is called the College of Justice, being the Supreme Court of Scotland in civil affairs. It consisted of fourteen judges

(half clergy, half laity), and a president, who heard and decided causes. A certain number of learned men, trained to understand the laws, were appointed to the task of pleading the causes of such as had law-suits before these judges, who constituted what is popularly termed the Court of Session. These men were called advocates; and this was the first establishment of a body, regularly educated to the law, which has ever since been regarded in Scotland as an honourable profession, and has produced many great men.

James V. used great diligence in improving his navy, and undertook what was, at the time, rather a perilous task, to sail in person round Scotland, and cause an accurate survey to be made of the various coasts, bays, and islands, harbours, and roadsteads of his kingdom, many of which had been unknown to his predecessors, even by name.

This active and patriotic Prince ordered the mineral wealth of Scotland to be also enquired into. He obtained miners from Germany, who extracted both silver and gold from the mines of Leadhills, in the upper part of Clydesdale. The gold was of fine quality, and found in quantity sufficient to supply metal for a very elegant gold coin, which, bearing on one side the head of James V. wearing a bonnet, has been thence called the Bonnet-piece. It is said, that upon one occasion the King invited the ambassadors of Spain, France, and other foreign countries, to hunt with him in Crawford Moor, the district in which lie the mines I have just mentioned. They dined in the castle of Crawford, a rude old fortress. The King made some apology for the dinner, which was composed of the game they had killed during the hunting and hawking of the day, but he assured his guests that the dessert would make them some amends, as he had given directions that it should consist of the finest fruits which the country afforded. The foreigners looked at each other in surprise, on hearing the King talk of fruits being produced amidst the black moors and barren mountains around them. But the dessert made its appearance in the shape of a number of covered saucers, one of which was placed before each guest, and being examined was found full of gold bonnet-pieces, which they

were desired to accept as the fruit produced by the mountains of Crawford Moor. This new sort of dessert was no doubt as acceptable as the most delicate fruits of a southern climate. The mines of the country are now wrought only for lead, of which they produce still a very large quantity.

Although, as we have mentioned, James was a good economist, he did not neglect the cultivation of the fine arts. He rebuilt the palace of Linlithgow, which is on a most magnificent plan, and made additions to that of Stirling. He encouraged several excellent poets and learned men, and his usual course of life appears to have been joyous and happy. He was himself a poet of some skill, and he permitted great freedom to the rhymers of his time, in addressing verses to him, some of which conveyed severe censure of his government, and others satires on his foibles.

James also encouraged the sciences, but was deceived by a foreigner, who pretended to have knowledge of the art of making gold. This person, however, who was either crack-brained, or an impostor, destroyed his own credit by the fabrication of a pair of wings, with which he proposed to fly from the top of Stirling castle. He actually made the attempt, but as his pinions would not work easily, he fell down the precipice, and broke his thigh-bone.

As the kingdom of Scotland, except during a very short and indecisive war with England, remained at peace till near the end of James's reign, and as that monarch was a wise and active prince, it might have been hoped that he at least would have escaped the misfortunes which seemed to haunt the name of Stewart. But a great change, which took place at this period, led James V. into a predicament, as unhappy as attended any of his ancestors.

[The "great change" referred to was what is commonly known to the Protestants as the Reformation. The controversies arising out of this movement led to an unfortunate war between James and his uncle Henry VIII., King of England.]

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War with England, and Death of James V. 1536-1542.

Henry sent numerous forces to ravage the Scottish Border. James obtained success in the first considerable action, to his very great satisfaction, and prepared for more decisive hostility. He assembled the array of his kingdom, and marched from Edinburgh as far as Fala, on his way to the Border, when tidings arrived, 1st November, 1542, that the English general had withdrawn his forces within the English frontier. On this news, the Scottish nobles, who, with their vassals, had joined the royal standard, intimated to their sovereign, that though they had taken up arms to save the country from invasion, yet they considered the war with England as an impolitic measure, and only undertaken to gratify the clergy; and that, therefore, the English having retired, they were determined not to advance one foot into the enemy's country. One Border chieftain alone offered with his retinue to follow the King wherever he chose to lead. This was John Scott of Thirlstane, whom James rewarded with an addition to his paternal coat-of-arms, with a bunch of spears for the crest, and the motto, "*Ready, aye Ready.*"

James, finding himself thus generally thwarted and deserted by the nobility, returned to Edinburgh, dishonoured before his people, and in the deepest dejection of mind.

To retaliate the inroads of the English, and wipe out the memory of Fala Moss, the King resolved that an army of ten thousand men should invade England on the Western Border; and he imprudently sent with them his peculiar favourite, Oliver Sinclair, who shared with the priests the unpopularity of the English war, and was highly obnoxious to the nobility, as one of those who engrossed the royal favour to their prejudice.

The army had just entered English ground, at a place called Solway Moss, when this Oliver Sinclair was raised upon the soldiers' shields to read to the army a commission, which, it was afterwards said, named Lord Maxwell commander of the expedition. But no one doubted at the time that Oliver Sinclair had himself been proclaimed commander-in-chief; and as he was generally disliked and despised, the army instantly fell into a state of extreme confusion. Four or five hundred Eng-

lish Borderers, commanded by Thomas Dacre and John Musgrave, perceived this fluctuation, and charged the numerous squadrons of the invading army. The Scots fled without even attempting to fight. Numbers of noblemen and persons of note suffered themselves to be made prisoners rather than face the displeasure of their disappointed sovereign.

The unfortunate James had lately been assailed by various calamities. The death of his two sons, and the disgrace of the defection at Fala, had made a deep impression on his mind, and haunted him even in the visions of the night. He dreamed he saw the fierce Sir James Hamilton, whom he had caused to be put to death upon slight evidence, approach him with a drawn sword, the bloody shade said, "Cruel tyrant, thou hast unjustly murdered me, who was indeed barbarous to other men, but always faithful and true to thee; wherefore now shalt thou have thy deserved punishment." So saying, it seemed to him as if Sir James Hamilton cut off first one arm and then another, and then left him, threatening to come back soon and cut his head off. Such a dream was very likely to arise in the King's mind, perturbed as it was by misfortunes, and even perhaps internally reproaching himself for Sir James Hamilton's death. But to James the striking off his arms appeared to allude to the death of his two sons, and he became convinced that the ultimate threats of the vision presaged his own death.

The disgraceful news of the battle, or rather the rout of Solway, filled up the measure of the King's despair and desolation. He shut himself up in the palace of Falkland, and refused to listen to any consolation. A burning fever, the consequence of his grief and shame, seized on the unfortunate monarch. They brought him tidings that his wife had given birth to a daughter; but he only replied, "Is it so?" reflecting on the alliance which had placed the Stewart family on the throne; "then God's will be done. It came with a lass, and it will go with a lass." With these words, presaging the extinction of his house, he made a signal of adieu to his courtiers, spoke little more, but turned his face to the wall, and died of the most melancholy of all diseases, a broken heart. He was scarcely thirty-one years old; in the very prime, therefore, of life.

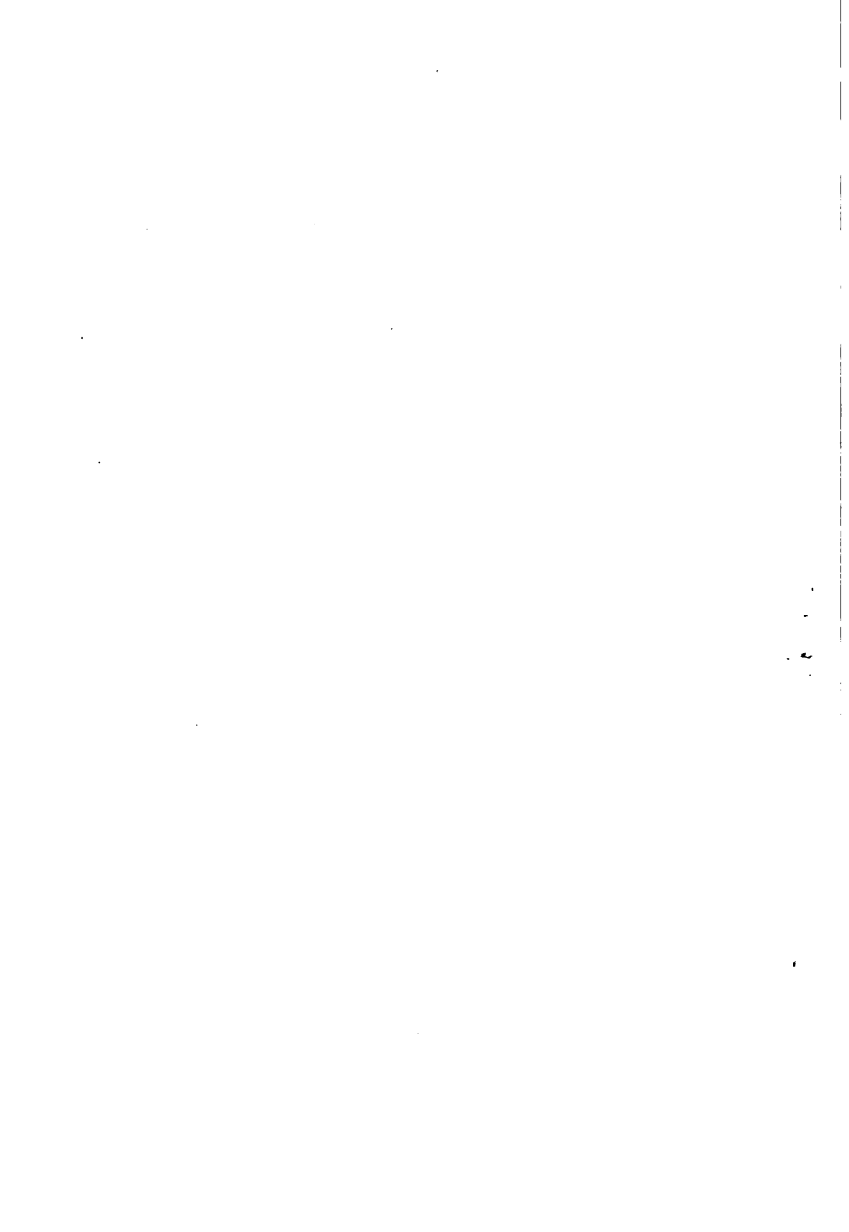
14th Dec.
1542.





THE SCOTT MONUMENT, EDINBURGH

To face p. XXX



SCOTT'S INTRODUCTION

AFTER the success of *Marmion*, I felt inclined to exclaim with Ulysses in the *Odysseys* : —

Ὀδὸς μὲν δὴ ἀεθλος ἀάατος ἐκτετέλεσται.
Νῦν αὖτε σκοπὸν ἄλλον.

Odys. xiii. 5.

‘ One venturous game my hand has won to-day —
Another, gallants, yet remains to play.’

The ancient manners, the habits and customs of the aboriginal race by whom the Highlands of Scotland were inhabited, had always appeared to me peculiarly adapted to poetry. The change in their manners, too, had taken place almost within my own time, or at least I had learned many particulars concerning the ancient state of the Highlands from the old men of the last generation. I had always thought the old Scottish Gael highly adapted for poetical composition. The feuds and political dissensions which, half a century earlier, would have rendered the richer and wealthier part of the kingdom indisposed to countenance a poem, the scene of which was laid in the Highlands, were now sunk in the generous compassion which the English, more than any other nation, feel for the misfortunes of an honorable foe. The Poems of Ossian had by their popularity sufficiently shown that if writings on Highland subjects were qualified to interest the reader, mere national prejudices were, in the present day, very unlikely to interfere with their success.

I had also read a great deal, seen much, and heard more, of that romantic country where I was in the habit of spending some time every autumn ; and the scenery of Loch Katrine was connected with the recollection of many a dear friend and merry expedition of former days. This poem, the action of which lay among scenes so beautiful and so deeply imprinted on my recollections, was a labor of love, and it was no less so to recall the manners and incidents introduced. The frequent custom of James IV., and particularly of James V., to walk through the kingdom in disguise, afforded me the hint of an incident which never fails to be interesting if managed with the slightest address or dexterity.

I may now confess, however, that the employment, though attended with great pleasure, was not without its doubts and anxieties. A lady, to whom I was nearly related, and with whom I lived, during her whole life, on the most brotherly terms of affection, was residing with me at the time when the work was in progress, and used to ask me what I could possibly do to rise so early in the morning (that happening to be the most convenient to me for composition). At last I told her the subject of my meditations ; and I can never forget the anxiety and affection expressed in her reply. 'Do not be so rash,' she said, 'my dearest cousin. You are already popular, — more so, perhaps, than you yourself will believe, or than even I, or other partial friends, can fairly allow to your merit. You stand high, — do not rashly attempt to climb higher, and incur the risk of a fall ; for, depend upon it, a favorite will not be permitted even to stumble with impunity.' I replied to this affectionate expostulation in the words of Montrose, —

"He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
Who dares not put it to the touch
To gain or lose it all."

'If I fail,' I said, for the dialogue is strong in my recollection, 'it is a sign that I ought never to have succeeded, and I will write prose for life ; you shall see no change in my temper, nor will I eat a single meal the worse. But if I succeed, —

"Up with the bonnie blue bonnet,
The dirk, and the feather, and a' !"

Afterwards I showed my affectionate and anxious critic the first canto of the poem, which reconciled her to my imprudence. Nevertheless, though I answered thus confidently, with the obstinacy often said to be proper to those who bear my surname, I acknowledge that my confidence was considerable shaken by the warning of her excellent taste and unbiassed friendship. Nor was I much comforted by her retraction of the unfavorable judgment, when I recollected how likely a natural partiality was to effect that change of opinion. In such cases affection rises like a light on the canvas, improves any favorable tints which it formerly exhibited, and throws its defects into the shade.

I remember that about the same time a friend started in to 'heeze up my hope,' like the 'sportsman with his cutty gun,' in the old song. He was bred a farmer, but a man of powerful understanding, natural good taste, and warm poetical feeling, perfectly competent to supply the wants of an imperfect or irregular education. He was a passionate admirer of field-sports, which we often pursued together.

As this friend happened to dine with me at Ashestiel one day, I took the opportunity of reading to him the first canto of *The Lady of the Lake*, in order to ascertain the effect the poem was likely to produce upon a person who was but too favorable a representative of readers at large. It is of course to be supposed that I determined rather to guide my opinion by what my friend might appear to feel, than by what he might think fit to say. His reception of my recitation, or prelection, was rather singular. He placed his hand across his brow, and listened with great attention, through the whole account of the stag-hunt, till the dogs threw themselves into the lake to follow their master, who embarks with Ellen Douglas. He then started up with a sudden exclamation, struck his hand on the table, and declared, in a voice of censure calculated for the occasion, that the dogs must have been totally ruined by being permitted to take the water after such a severe chase. I own I was much encouraged by the species of revery which had possessed so zealous a follower of the sports of the ancient Nimrod, who had been completely surprised out of all doubts of the reality of the tale. Another of his remarks gave me less pleasure. He detected the identity of the king with the wandering knight, Fitz-James, when he winds his bugle to summon his attendants. . . .

This discovery, as Mr. Pepys says of the rent in his camlet cloak, was but a trifle, yet it troubled me; and I was at a good deal of pains to efface any marks by which I thought my secret could be traced before the conclusion, when I relied on it with the same hope of producing effect, with which the Irish post-boy is said to reserve a 'trot for the avenue.'

I took uncommon pains to verify the accuracy of the local circumstances of this story. I recollect, in particular, that to ascertain whether I was telling a probable tale I went into

Perthshire, to see whether King James could actually have ridden from the Banks to Loch Vennachar to Stirling Castle within the time supposed in the poem, and had the pleasure to satisfy myself that it was quite practicable.

After a considerable delay, *The Lady of the Lake* appeared in June 1810; and its success was certainly so extraordinary as to induce me for the moment to conclude that I had at last fixed a nail in the proverbially inconstant wheel of Fortune, whose stability in behalf of an individual who had so boldly courted her favors for three successive times had not as yet been shaken. I had attained, perhaps, that degree of reputation at which prudence, or certainly timidity, would have made a halt, and discontinued efforts by which I was far more likely to diminish my fame than to increase it. But, as the celebrated John Wilkes is said to have explained to his late Majesty, that he himself, amid his full tide of popularity, was never a Wilkite, so I can, with honest truth, exculpate myself from having been at any time a partisan of my own poetry, even when it was in the highest fashion with the million. It must not be supposed that I was either so ungrateful or so superabundantly candid as to despise or scorn the value of those whose voice had elevated me so much higher than my own opinion told me I deserved. I felt, on the contrary, the more grateful to the public, as receiving that from partiality to me, which I could not have claimed from merit; and I endeavored to deserve the partiality by continuing such exertions as I was capable of for their amusement.

It may be that I did not, in this continued course of scribbling, consult either the interest of the public or my own. But the former had effectual means of defending themselves, and could, by their coldness, sufficiently check any approach to intrusion; and for myself, I had now for several years dedicated my hours so much to literary labor that I should have felt difficulty in employing myself otherwise; and so, like Dogberry, I generously bestowed all my tediousness on the public, comforting myself with the reflection that, if posterity should think me undeserving of the favor with which I was regarded by my contemporaries, 'they could not but say I *had* the crown,' and had enjoyed for a time that popularity which is so much coveted.

I conceived, however, that I held the distinguished situation I had obtained, however unworthily, rather like the champion of pugilism, on the condition of being always ready to show proofs of my skill, than in the manner of the champions of chivalry, who performs his duties only on rare and solemn occasions. I was in any case conscious that I could not long hold a situation which the caprice rather than the judgment of the public had bestowed upon me, and preferred being deprived of my precedence by some more worthy rival, to sinking into contempt for my indolence, and losing my reputation by what Scottish lawyers call the *negative prescription*. Accordingly, those who choose to look at the Introduction to *Rokeby*, will be able to trace the steps by which I declined as a poet to figure as a novelist ; as the ballad says, Queen Eleanor sunk at Charing Cross to rise again at Queenhithe.

It only remains for me to say that, during my short pre-eminence of popularity, I faithfully observed the rules of moderation which I had resolved to follow before I began my course as a man of letters. If a man is determined to make a noise in the world, he is sure to encounter abuse and ridicule, as he who gallops furiously through a village must reckon on being followed by the curs in full cry. Experienced persons know that in stretching to flog the latter, the rider is very apt to catch a bad fall ; nor is an attempt to chastise a malignant critic attended with less danger to the author. On this principle, I let parody, burlesque, and squibs find their own level ; and while the latter hissed most fiercely, I was cautious never to catch them up, as schoolboys do, to throw them back against the naughty boy who fired them off, wisely remembering that they are in such cases apt to explode in the handling. Let me add that my reign (since Byron has so called it) was marked by some instances of good-nature as well as patience. I never refused a literary person of merit such services in smoothing his way to the public as were in my power ; and I had the advantage — rather an uncommon one with our irritable race — to enjoy general favor without incurring permanent ill-will, so far as is known to me, among any of my contemporaries.

ABBOTSFORD, April, 1830.

ARGUMENT.

The scene of the following Poem is laid chiefly in the vicinity of Loch Katrine, in the Western Highlands of Perthshire. The time of Action includes Six Days, and the transactions of each Day occupy a Canto.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

CANTO FIRST

THE CHASE

HARP of the North ! that mouldering long hast hung
On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,

Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
Muffling with verdant ringlet every string, —

O Minstrel Harp, still must thine accents sleep ?
Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,
Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep ?

Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon,
Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,
When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,
Aroused the fearful or subdued the proud.

At each according pause was heard aloud
Thine ardent symphony sublime and high !
Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bowed ;

For still the burden of thy minstrelsy
Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's match-
less eye.

O, wake once more ! how rude soe'er the hand
That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray ;

O, wake once more ! though scarce my skill command
Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay :

Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,
And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,
Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway, 25
The wizard note has not been touched in vain.
Then silent be no more ! Enchantress, wake again.

I

The stag at eve had drunk his fill,
Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,
And deep his midnight lair had made 30
In lone Glenartney's hazel shade ;
But when the sun his beacon red
Had kindled on Benvoirlich's head,
The deep-mouthed bloodhound's heavy bay
Resounded up the rocky way, 35
And faint, from farther distance borne,
Were heard the clanging hoof and horn.

II

As Chief, who hears his warder call,
" To arms ! the foemen storm the wall,"
The antlered monarch of the waste 40
Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.
But ere his fleet career he took,
The dewdrops from his flanks he shook ;
Like crested leader proud and high
Tossed his beamed frontlet to the sky ; 45
A moment gazed adown the dale,
A moment snuffed the tainted gale,
A moment listened to the cry,
That thickened as the chase drew nigh ;
Then, as the headmost foes appeared, 50
With one brave bound the copse he cleared,
And, stretching forward free and far,
Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var.

III

Yelled on the view the opening pack ;
Rock, glen, and cavern paid them back ; 55
To many a mingled sound at once
The awakened mountain gave response.
A hundred dogs bayed deep and strong,
Clattered a hundred steeds along,
Their peal the merry horns rung out, 60
A hundred voices joined the shout ;
With hark and whoop and wild halloo,
No rest Benvoirlich's echoes knew.
Far from the tumult fled the roe,
Close in her covert cowered the doe, 65
The falcon, from her cairn on high,
Cast on the rout a wandering eye,
Till far beyond her piercing ken
The hurricane had swept the glen.
Faint, and more faint, its failing din 70
Returned from cavern, cliff, and linn,
And silence settled, wide and still,
On the lone wood and mighty hill.

IV

Less loud the sounds of sylvan war
Disturbed the heights of Uam-Var, 75
And roused the cavern where, 'tis told,
A giant made his den of old ;
For ere that steep ascent was won,
High in his pathway hung the sun,
And many a gallant, stayed perforce, 80
Was fain to breathe his faltering horse,
And of the trackers of the deer
Scarce half the lessening pack was near ;
So shrewdly on the mountain-side
Had the bold burst their mettle tried. 85

V

The noble stag was pausing now
 Upon the mountain's southern brow,
 Where broad extended, far beneath,
 The varied realms of fair Menteith.
 With anxious eye he wandered o'er 90
 Mountain and meadow, moss and moor,
 And pondered refuge from his toil,
 By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.
 But nearer was the copsewood gray
 That waved and wept on Loch Achray, 95
 And mingled with the pine-trees blue
 On the bold cliffs of Benvenue.
 Fresh vigor with the hope returned,
 With flying foot the heath he spurned,
 Held westward with unwearied race, 100
 And left behind the panting chase.

VI

'Twere long to tell what steeds gave o'er,
 As swept the hunt through Cambusmore;
 What reins were tightened in despair,
 When rose Benledi's ridge in air; 105
 Who flagged upon Bochastle's heath,
 Who shunned to stem the flooded Teith, —
 For twice that day, from shore to shore,
 The gallant stag swam stoutly o'er.
 Few were the stragglers, following far, 120
 That reached the lake of Vennachar;
 And when the Brigg of Turk was won,
 The headmost horseman rode alone.

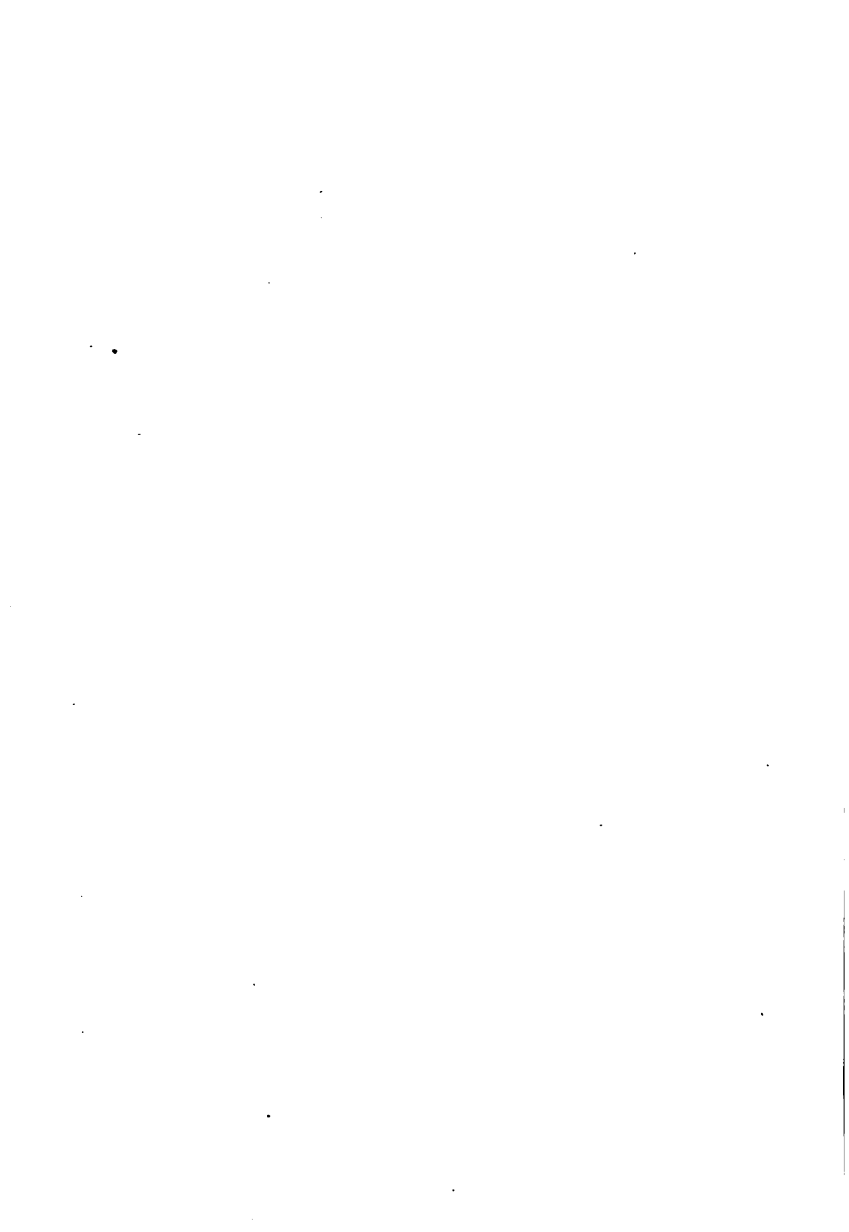
VII

Alone, but with unbated zeal,
 That horseman plied the scourge and steel; 125



THE BRIDGE OF TURK

To face p. 1



For jaded now, and spent with toil,
Embossed with foam, and dark with soil,
While every gasp with sobs he drew,
The laboring stag strained full in view.
Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed, 120
Unmatched for courage, breath, and speed,
Fast on his flying traces came,
And all but won that desperate game ;
For, scarce a spear's length from his haunch,
Vindictive, toiled the bloodhounds stanch ; 125
Nor nearer might the dogs attain,
Nor farther might the quarry strain.
Thus up the margin of the lake,
Between the precipice and brake,
O'er stock and rock their race they take. 130

VIII

The hunter marked that mountain high,
The lone lake's western boundary,
And deemed the stag must turn to bay,
Where that huge rampart barred the way ;
Already glorying in the prize, 135
Measured his antlers with his eyes ;
For the death-wound and death-halloo
Mustered his breath, his whinyard drew : —
But thundering as he came prepared,
With ready arm and weapon bared, 140
The wily quarry shunned the shock,
And turned him from the opposing rock ;
Then, dashing down a darksome glen,
Soon lost to hound and Hunter's ken,
In the deep Trosachs' wildest nook 145
His solitary refuge took.
There, while close couched the thicket shed
Cold dews and wild flowers on his head,

He heard the baffled dogs in vain
Rave through the hollow pass amain,
Chiding the rocks that yelled again. 150

IX

Close on the hounds the Hunter came,
To cheer them on the vanished game;
But, stumbling in the rugged dell,
The gallant horse exhausted fell. 155
The impatient rider strove in vain
To rouse him with the spur and rein,
For the good steed, his labors o'er,
Stretched his stiff limbs, to rise no more;
Then, touched with pity and remorse, 160
He sorrowed o'er the expiring horse.
"I little thought, when first thy rein
I slacked upon the banks of Seine,
That Highland eagle e'er should feed
On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed ! 165
Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day,
That costs thy life, my gallant gray !"

X

Then through the dell his horn resounds,
From vain pursuit to call the hounds.
Back limped, with slow and crippled pace, 170
The sulky leaders of the chase;
Close to their master's side they pressed,
With drooping tail and humbled crest;
But still the dingle's hollow throat
Prolonged the swelling bugle-note. 175
The owlets started from their dream,
The eagles answered with their scream,
Round and around the sounds were cast,
Till echo seemed an answering blast ;

And on the Hunter hied his way,
To join some comrades of the day,
Yet often paused, so strange the road,
So wondrous were the scenes it showed.

180

XI

The western waves of ebbing day
Rolled o'er the glen their level way ;
Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
Was bathed in floods of living fire.
But not a setting beam could glow
Within the dark ravines below,
Where twined the path in shadow hid,
Round many a rocky pyramid,
Shooting abruptly from the dell
Its thunder-splintered pinnacle ;
Round many an insulated mass,
The native bulwarks of the pass,
Huge as the tower which builders vain
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain,
The rocky summits, split and rent,
Formed turret, dome, or battlement,
Or seemed fantastically set
With cupola or minaret,
Wild crests as pagod ever decked,
Or mosque of Eastern architect.
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
Nor lacked they many a banner fair ;
For, from their shivered brows displayed,
Far o'er the unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dewdrop sheen,
The brier-rose fell in streamers green,
And creeping shrubs of thousand dyes
Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs.

185

190

195

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XII

Boon nature scattered, free and wild,
Each plant or flower, the mountain's child.
Here eglantine embalmed the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there ; 215
The primrose pale and violet flower
Found in each clift a narrow bower ;
Foxglove and nightshade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride,
Grouped their dark hues with every stain 220
The weather-beaten crags retain.
With boughs that quaked at every breath,
Gray birch and aspen wept beneath ;
Aloft, the ash and warrior oak
Cast anchor in the rifted rock ; 225
And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung
His shattered trunk, and frequent flung,
Where seemed the cliffs to meet on high,
His boughs athwart the narrowed sky.
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced, 230
Where glistening streamers waved and danced,
The wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue ;
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream. 235

XIII

Onward, amid the copse 'gan peep
A narrow inlet, still and deep,
Affording scarce such breadth of brim
As served the wild duck's brood to swim.
Lost for a space, through thickets veering, 240
But broader when again appearing,
Tall rocks and tufted knolls their face
Could on the dark-blue mirror trace ;

And farther as the Hunter strayed,
Still broader sweep its channels made. 245
The shaggy mounds no longer stood,
Emerging from entangled wood,
But, wave-encircled, seemed to float,
Like castle girdled with its moat ;
Yet broader floods extending still 250
Divide them from their parent hill,
Till each, retiring, claims to be
An islet in an inland sea.

XIV

And now, to issue from the glen,
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken, 255
Unless he climb with footing nice
A far-projecting precipice.
The broom's tough roots his ladder made,
The hazel saplings lent their aid ;
And thus an airy point he won, 260
Where, gleaming with the setting sun,
One burnished sheet of living gold,
Loch Katrine lay beneath him rolled,
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek, and bay, 265
And islands that, empurpled bright,
Floated amid the livelier light,
And mountains that like giants stand
To sentinel enchanted land.
High on the south, huge Benvenue 270
Down to the lake in masses threw
Crag, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurled,
The fragments of an earlier world ;
A wildering forest feathered o'er
His ruined sides and summit hoar, 275
While on the north, through middle air,
Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare.

XV

From the steep promontory gazed
The stranger, raptured and amazed,
And, "What a scene was here," he cried, 280
"For princely pomp or churchman's pride!
On this bold brow, a lordly tower;
In that soft vale, a lady's bower;
On yonder meadow far away,
The turrets of a cloister gray; 285
How blithely might the bugle-horn
Chide on the lake the lingering morn!
How sweet at eve the lover's lute
Chime when the groves were still and mute!
And when the midnight moon should lave 290
Her forehead in the silver wave,
How solemn on the ear would come
The holy matins' distant hum,
While the deep peal's commanding tone
Should wake, in yonder islet lone, 295
A sainted hermit from his cell,
To drop a bead with every knell!
And bugle, lute, and bell, and all,
Should each bewildered stranger call
To friendly feast and lighted hall. 300

XVI

"Blithe were it then to wander here!
But now — beshrew yon nimble deer —
Like that same hermit's, thin and spare,
The copse must give my evening fare;
Some mossy bank my couch must be, 305
Some rustling oak my canopy.
Yet pass we that; the war and chase
Give little choice of resting-place; —
A summer night in greenwood spent

Were but to-morrow's merriment : 320
But hosts may in these wilds abound,
Such as are better missed than found ;
To meet with Highland plunderers here
Were worse than loss of steed or deer.—
I am alone ; — my bugle-strain 325
May call some straggler of the train ;
Or, fall the worst that may betide,
Ere now this falchion has been tried.”

XVII

But scarce again his horn he wound,
When lo ! forth starting at the sound, 330
From underneath an aged oak
That slanted from the islet rock,
A damsel guider of its way,
A little skiff shot to the bay,
That round the promontory steep 335
Led its deep line in graceful sweep,
Eddying, in almost viewless wave,
The weeping willow twig to lave,
And kiss, with whispering sound and slow,
The beach of pebbles bright as snow. 340
The boat had touched this silver strand
Just as the Hunter left his stand,
And stood concealed amid the brake,
To view this Lady of the Lake.
The maiden paused, as if again 345
She thought to catch the distant strain.
With head upraised, and look intent,
And eye and ear attentive bent,
And locks flung back, and lips apart,
Like monument of Grecian art, 350
In listening mood, she seemed to stand,
The guardian Naiad of the strand.

XVIII

And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace
A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,
Of finer form or lovelier face ! 345
What though the sun, with ardent frown,
Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown, —
The sportive toil, which, short and light,
Had dyed her glowing hue so bright,
Served too in hastier swell to show 350
Short glimpses of a breast of snow :
What though no rule of courtly grace
To measured mood had trained her pace, —
A foot more light, a step more true,
Ne'er from the heath-flower dashed the dew ; 355
E'en the slight harebell raised its head,
Elastic from her airy tread :
What though upon her speech there hung
The accents of the mountain tongue, —
Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear, 360
The listener held his breath to hear !

XIX

A chieftain's daughter seemed the maid ;
Her satin snood, her silken plaid,
Her golden brooch, such birth betrayed.
And seldom was a snood amid 365
Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,
Whose glossy black to shame might bring
The plumage of the raven's wing ;
And seldom o'er a breast so fair
Mantled a plaid with modest care, 370
And never brooch the folds combined
Above a heart more good and kind.
Her kindness and her worth to spy,
You need but gaze on Ellen's eye ;

Not Katrine in her mirror blue
Gives back the shaggy banks more true,
Than every free-born glance confessed
The guileless movements of her breast;
Whether joy danced in her dark eye,
Or woe or pity claimed a sigh,
Or filial love was glowing there,
Or meek devotion poured a prayer,
Or tale of injury called forth
The indignant spirit of the North.
One only passion unrevealed
With maiden pride the maid concealed,
Yet not less purely felt the flame; —
O, need I tell that passion's name?

XX

Impatient of the silent horn,
Now on the gale her voice was borne: —
“Father!” she cried; the rocks around
Loved to prolong the gentle sound.
Awhile she paused, no answer came; —
“Malcolm, was thine the blast?” the name
Less resolutely uttered fell,
The echoes could not catch the swell.
“A stranger I,” the Huntsman said,
Advancing from the hazel shade.
The maid, alarmed, with hasty oar
Pushed her light shallop from the shore,
And when a space was gained between,
Closer she drew her bosom's screen; —
So forth the startled swan would swing,
So turn to prune his ruffled wing.
Then safe, though fluttered and amazed,
She paused, and on the stranger gazed.
Not his the form, nor his the eye,
That youthful maidens wont to fly.

XXI

On his bold visage middle age
Had slightly pressed its signet sage, 410
Yet had not quenched the open truth
And fiery vehemence of youth ;
Forward and frolic glee was there,
The will to do, the soul to dare,
The sparkling glance, soon blown to fire, 415
Of hasty love or headlong ire.
His limbs were cast in manly mould
For hardy sports or contest bold ;
And though in peaceful garb arrayed,
And weaponless except his blade, 420
His stately mien as well implied
A high-born heart, a martial pride,
As if a baron's crest he wore,
And sheathed in armor trode the shore.
Slighting the petty need he showed, 425
He told of his benighted road ;
His ready speech flowed fair and free,
In phrase of gentlest courtesy,
Yet seemed that tone and gesture bland
Less used to sue than to command. 430

XXII

Awhile the maid the stranger eyed,
And, reassured, at length replied,
That Highland halls were open still
To wildered wanderers of the hill.
“ Nor think you unexpected come 435
To yon lone isle, our desert home ;
Before the heath had lost the dew,
This morn, a couch was pulled for you ;
On yonder mountain's purple head
Have ptarmigan and heath-cock bled, 440

And our broad nets have swept the mere,
To furnish forth your evening cheer." —
"Now, by the rood, my lovely maid,
Your courtesy has erred," he said ;
"No right have I to claim, misplaced, 445
The welcome of expected guest.
A wanderer, here by fortune tost,
My way, my friends, my courser lost,
I ne'er before, believe me, fair,
Have ever drawn your mountain air, 450
Till on this lake's romantic strand
I found a fay in fairy land !" —

XXIII

"I well believe," the maid replied,
As her light skiff approached the side, —
"I well believe, that ne'er before 455
Your foot has trod Loch Katrine's shore ;
But yet, as far as yesternight,
Old Allan-bane foretold your plight, —
A gray-haired sire, whose eye intent
Was on the visioned future bent. 460
He saw your steed, a dappled gray,
Lie dead beneath the birchen way ;
Painted exact your form and mien,
Your hunting-suit of Lincoln green,
That tasselled horn so gayly gilt, 465
That falchion's crooked blade and hilt,
That cap with heron plumage trim,
And yon two hounds so dark and grim.
He bade that all should ready be
To grace a guest of fair degree ; 470
But light I held his prophecy,
And deemed it was my father's horn
Whose echoes o'er the lake were borne."

XXIV

The stranger smiled : — “ Since to your home
A destined errant-knight I come, 475
Announced by prophet sooth and old,
Doomed, doubtless, for achievement bold,
I'll lightly front each high emprise
For one kind glance of those bright eyes.
Permit me first the task to guide 480
Your fairy frigate o'er the tide.”
The maid, with smile suppressed and sly,
The toil unwonted saw him try ;
For seldom, sure, if e'er before,
His noble hand had grasped an oar : 485
Yet with main strength his strokes he drew,
And o'er the lake the shallop flew ;
With heads erect and whimpering cry,
The hounds behind their passage ply.
Nor frequent does the bright oar break 490
The darkening mirror of the lake,
Until the rocky isle they reach,
And moor their shallop on the beach.

XXV

The stranger viewed the shore around ;
'Twas all so close with copsewood bound, 495
Nor track nor pathway might declare
That human foot frequented there,
Until the mountain maiden showed
A clambering unsuspected road,
That winded through the tangled screen, 500
And opened on a narrow green,
Where weeping birch and willow round
With their long fibres swept the ground.
Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,
Some chief had framed a rustic bower. 505

XXVI

It was a lodge of ample size,
But strange of structure and device;
Of such materials as around
The workman's hand had readiest found.
Lopped of their boughs, their hoar trunks bared, 510
And by the hatchet rudely squared,
To give the walls their destined height,
The sturdy oak and ash unite;
While moss and clay and leaves combined
To fence each crevice from the wind. 515
The lighter pine-trees overhead
Their slender length for rafters spread,
And withered heath and rushes dry
Supplied a russet canopy.
Due westward, fronting to the green, 520
A rural portico was seen,
Aloft on native pillars borne,
Of mountain fir with bark unshorn,
Where Ellen's hand had taught to twine
The ivy and Idæan vine, 525
The clematis, the favored flower
Which boasts the name of virgin-bower,
And every hardy plant could bear
Loch Katrine's keen and searching air.
An instant in this porch she stayed, 530
And gayly to the stranger said:
"On heaven and on thy lady call,
And enter the enchanted hall!"

XXVII

"My hope, my heaven, my trust must be,
My gentle guide, in following thee!" — 535
He crossed the threshold, — and a clang
Of angry steel that instant rang.

To his bold brow his spirit rushed,
But soon for vain alarm he blushed,
When on the floor he saw displayed, 540
Cause of the din, a naked blade
Dropped from the sheath, that careless flung
Upon a stag's huge antlers swung;
For all around, the walls to grace,
Hung trophies of the fight or chase: 545
A target there, a bugle here,
A battle-ax, a hunting-spear,
And broadswords, bows, and arrows store,
With the tusked trophies of the boar.
Here grins the wolf as when he died, 550
And there the wildcat's brindled hide
The frontlet of the elk adorns,
Or mantles o'er the bison's horns;
Pennons and flags defaced and stained,
That blackening streaks of blood retained, 555
And deer-skins, dappled, dun, and white,
With otter's fur and seal's unite,
In rude and uncouth tapestry all,
To garnish forth the sylvan hall.

XXVIII

The wondering stranger round him gazed, 560
And next the fallen weapon raised: —
Few were the arms whose sinewy strength
Sufficed to stretch it forth at length.
And as the brand he poised and swayed,
“I never knew but one,” he said, 565
“Whose stalwart arm might brook to wield
A blade like this in battle-field.”
She sighed, then smiled and took the word:
“You see the guardian champion's sword;
As light it trembles in his hand 570
As in my grasp a hazel wand:

My sire's tall form might grace the part
Of Ferragus or Ascabart,
But in the absent giant's hold
Are women now, and menials old."

575

XXIX

The mistress of the mansion came,
Mature of age, a graceful dame,
Whose easy step and stately port
Had well become a princely court,
To whom, though more than kindred knew, 580
Young Ellen gave a mother's due.
Meet welcome to her guest she made,
And every courteous rite was paid
That hospitality could claim,
Though all unasked his birth and name. 585
Such then the reverence to a guest,
That fellest foe might join the feast,
And from his deadliest foeman's door
Unquestioned turn, the banquet o'er.
At length his rank the stranger names, 590
"The Knight of Snowdown, James Fitz-James;
Lord of a barren heritage,
Which his brave sires, from age to age,
By their good swords had held with toil;
His sire had fallen in such turmoil, 595
And he, God wot, was forced to stand
Oft for his right with blade in hand.
This morning with Lord Moray's train
He chased a stalwart stag in vain,
Outstripped his comrades, missed the deer, 600
Lost his good steed, and wandered here."

XXX

Fain would the Knight in turn require
The name and state of Ellen's sire.

Well showed the elder lady's mien
 That courts and cities she had seen ; 605
 Ellen, though more her looks displayed
 The simple grace of sylvan maid,
 In speech and gesture, form and face,
 Showed she was come of gentle race.
 'Twere strange in ruder rank to find 610
 Such looks, such manners, and such mind.
 Each hint the Knight of Snowdoun gave,
 Dame Margaret heard with silence grave ;
 Or Ellen, innocently gay,
 Turned all inquiry light away : — 615
 "Weird women we ! by dale and down
 We dwell, afar from tower and town.
 We stem the flood, we ride the blast,
 On wandering knights our spells we cast ;
 While viewless minstrels touch the string, 620
 'Tis thus our charmed rhymes we sing."
 She sung, and still a harp unseen
 Filled up the symphony between.

XXXI

SONG

"Soldier, rest ! thy warfare o'er,
 Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking ; 625
 Dream of battle fields no more,
 Days of danger, nights of waking.
 In our isle's enchanted hall,
 Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
 Fairy strains of music fall, 630
 Every sense in slumber dewing.
 Soldier, rest ! thy warfare o'er,
 Dream of fighting fields no more ;
 Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
 Morn of toil, nor night of waking. 635

“No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
Armor’s clang or war-steed champing,
Trump nor pibroch summon here
Mustering clan or squadron tramping.
Yet the lark’s shrill fife may come
At the daybreak from the fallow,
And the bittern sound his drum,
Booming from the sedge shallow.
Ruder sounds shall none be near,
Guards nor warders challenge here,
Here’s no war-steed’s neigh and champing,
Shouting clans or squadrons stamping.”

640

645

XXXII

She paused, — then, blushing, led the lay,
To grace the stranger of the day.
Her mellow notes awhile prolong
The cadence of the flowing song,
Till to her lips in measured frame
The minstrel verse spontaneous came.

650

SONG CONTINUED

“Huntsman, rest ! thy chase is done ;
While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
Dream not, with the rising sun,
Bugles here shall sound reveillé.
Sleep ! the deer is in his den ;
Sleep ! thy hounds are by thee lying ;
Sleep ! nor dream in yonder glen
How thy gallant steed lay dying.
Huntsman, rest ! thy chase is done ;
Think not of the rising sun,
For at dawning to assail ye
Here no bugles sound reveillé.”

655

660

665

XXXIII

The hall was cleared, — the stranger's bed
Was there of mountain heather spread,
Where oft a hundred guests had lain,
And dreamed their forest sports again.
But vainly did the heath-flower shed 670
Its moorland fragrance round his head ;
Not Ellen's spell had lulled to rest
The fever of his troubled breast.
In broken dreams the image rose
Of varied perils, pains, and woes : 675
His steed now flounders in the brake,
Now sinks his barge upon the lake ;
Now leader of a broken host,
His standard falls, his honor's lost.
Then, — from my couch may heavenly might 680
Chase that worst phantom of the night ! —
Again returned the scenes of youth,
Of confident, undoubting truth ;
Again his soul he interchanged
With friends whose hearts were long estranged. 685
They come, in dim procession led,
The cold, the faithless, and the dead ;
As warm each hand, each brow as gay,
As if they parted yesterday.
And doubt distracts him at the view, — 690
O were his senses false or true ?
Dreamed he of death or broken vow,
Or is it all a vision now ?

XXXIV

At length, with Ellen in a grove
He seemed to walk and speak of love ; 695
She listened with a blush and sigh,
His suit was warm, his hopes were high.

He sought her yielded hand to clasp,
And a cold gauntlet met his grasp :
The phantom's sex was changed and gone, 700
Upon its head a helmet shone ;
Slowly enlarged to giant size,
With darkened cheek and threatening eyes,
The grisly visage, stern and hoar,
To Ellen still a likeness bore. — 705
He woke, and, panting with affright,
Recalled the vision of the night.
The hearth's decaying brands were red,
And deep and dusky lustre shed,
Half showing, half concealing, all 710
The uncouth trophies of the hall.
Mid those the stranger fixed his eye
Where that huge falchion hung on high,
And thoughts on thoughts, a countless throng,
Rushed, chasing countless thoughts along, 715
Until, the giddy whirl to cure,
He rose and sought the moonshine pure.

XXXV

The wild rose, eglantine, and broom
Wasted around their rich perfume ;
The birch-trees wept in fragrant balm ; 720
The aspens slept beneath the calm ;
The silver light, with quivering glance,
Played on the water's still expanse, —
Wild were the heart whose passion's sway
Could rage beneath the sober ray ! 725
He felt its calm, that warrior guest,
While thus he communed with his breast : —
“ Why is it, at each turn I trace
Some memory of that exiled race ?
Can I not mountain maiden spy,
But she must bear the Douglas eye ? 730

Can I not view a Highland brand,
But it must match the Douglas hand ?
Can I not frame a fevered dream,
But still the Douglas is the theme ? 735
I'll dream no more, — by manly mind
Not even in sleep is will resigned.
My midnight orisons said o'er,
I'll turn to rest, and dream no more."
His midnight orisons he told, 740
A prayer with every bead of gold,
Consigned to heaven his cares and woes,
And sunk in undisturbed repose,
Until the heath-cock shrilly crew,
And morning dawned on Benvenue. 745

CANTO SECOND

THE ISLAND

I

AT morn the black cock trims his jetty wing,
'Tis morning prompts the linnet's blithest lay,
All Nature's children feel the matin spring
Of life reviving, with reviving day ;
And while yon little bark glides down the bay, 5
Wafting the stranger on his way again,
Morn's genial influence roused a minstrel gray,
And sweetly o'er the lake was heard thy strain,
Mixed with the sounding harp, O white-haired Allan-
bane !

II

SONG

" Not faster yonder rowers' might 20
Flings from their oars the spray,
Not faster yonder rippling bright,
That tracks the shallop's course in light,
Melts in the lake away,
Than men from memory erase 15
The benefits of former days ;
Then, stranger, go ! good speed the while,
Nor think again of the lonely isle.

" High place to thee in royal court,
High place in battled line, 20
Good hawk and hound for sylvan sport !
Where beauty sees the brave resort,
The honored meed be thine !

True be thy sword, thy friend sincere,
 Thy lady constant, kind, and dear, 35
 And lost in love's and friendship's smile
 Be memory of the lonely isle !

III

SONG CONTINUED

" But if beneath yon southern sky
 A plaided stranger roam,
 Whose drooping crest and stifled sigh, 30
 And sunken cheek and heavy eye,
 Pine for his Highland home ;
 Then, warrior, then be thine to show
 The care that soothes a wanderer's woe ;
 Remember then thy hap erewhile, 35
 A stranger in the lonely isle.

" Or if on life's uncertain main
 Mishap shall mar thy sail ;
 If faithful, wise, and brave in vain,
 Woe, want, and exile thou sustain 40
 Beneath the fickle gale ;
 Waste not a sigh on fortune changed,
 On thankless courts, or friends estranged,
 But come where kindred worth shall smile,
 To greet thee in the lonely isle." 45

IV

As died the sounds upon the tide,
 The shallop reached the mainland side,
 And ere his onward way he took,
 The stranger cast a lingering look,
 Where easily his eye might reach 50
 The Harper on the islet beach,



ELLEN'S ISLE

To face p. 26



Reclined against a blighted tree,
As wasted, gray, and worn as he.
To minstrel meditation given,
His reverend brow was raised to heaven, 55
As from the rising sun to claim
A sparkle of inspiring flame.
His hand, reclined upon the wire,
Seemed watching the awakening fire ;
So still he sat as those who wait 60
Till judgment speak the doom of fate ;
So still, as if no breeze might dare
To lift one lock of hoary hair ;
So still, as life itself were fled
In the last sound his harp had sped. 65

V

Upon a rock with lichens wild,
Beside him Ellen sat and smiled.—
Smiled she to see the stately drake
Lead forth his fleet upon the lake,
While her vexed spaniel from the beach 70
Bayed at the prize beyond his reach ?
Yet tell me, then, the maid who knows,
Why deepened on her cheek the rose ?—
Forgive, forgive, Fidelity !
Perchance the maiden smiled to see 75
Yon parting lingerer wave adieu,
And stop and turn to wave anew ;
And, lovely ladies, ere your ire,
Condemn the heroine of my lyre,
Show me the fair would scorn to spy 80
And prize such conquest of her eye !

VI

While yet he loitered on the spot,
It seemed as Ellen marked him out ;

But when he turned him to the glade,
One courteous parting sign she made; 85
And after, oft the knight would say,
That not when prize of festal day
Was dealt him by the brightest fair
Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,
So highly did his bosom swell 90
As at that simple mute farewell.
Now with a trusty mountain-guide,
And his dark stag hounds by his side,
He parts, — the maid, unconscious still,
Watched him wind slowly round the hill; 95
But when his stately form was hid,
The guardian in her bosom chid, —
“Thy Malcolm! vain and selfish maid!”
’Twas thus upbraiding conscience said, —
“Not so had Malcolm idly hung 100
On the smooth phrase of Southern tongue;
Not so had Malcolm strained his eye
Another step than thine to spy.” —
“Wake, Allan-bane,” aloud she cried
To the old minstrel by her side, — 105
“Arouse thee from thy moody dream!
I’ll give thy harp heroic theme,
And warm thee with a noble name;
Pour forth the glory of the Græme!”
Scarce from her lip the word had rushed, 110
When deep the conscious maiden blushed;
For of his clan, in hall and bower,
Young Malcolm Græme was held the flower.

VII

The minstrel waked his harp, — three times
Arose the well-known martial chimes, 115
And thrice their high heroic pride
In melancholy murmurs died.

“Vainly thou bidst, O noble maid,”
Clasping his withered hands, he said,
“Vainly thou bidst me wake the strain, 120
Though all unwont to bid in vain.
Alas! than mine a mightier hand
Has tuned my harp, my strings has spanned!
I touch the chords of joy, but low
And mournful answer notes of woe; 125
And the proud march which victors tread
Sinks in the wailing for the dead.
O, well for me, if mine alone
That dirge’s deep prophetic tone!
If, as my tuneful fathers said, 130
This harp, which erst Saint Modan swayed,
Can thus its master’s fate foretell,
Then welcome be the minstrel’s knell!

VIII

“But ah! dear lady, thus it sighed,
The eve thy sainted mother died; 135
And such the sounds which, while I strove
To wake a lay of war or love,
Came marring all the festal mirth,
Appalling me who gave them birth,
And, disobedient to my call, 140
Wailed loud through Bothwell’s bannered hall,
Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,
Were exiled from their native heaven. —
O! if yet worse mishap and woe
My master’s house must undergo, 145
Or aught but weal to Ellen fair
Brood in these accents of despair,
No future bard, sad Harp! shall fling
Triumph or rapture from thy string;
One short, one final strain shall flow, 150
Fraught with unutterable woe,

Then shivered shall thy fragments lie,
Thy master cast him down and die ! ”

IX

Soothing she answered him : “ Assuage,
Mine honored friend, the fears of age ; 155
All melodies to thee are known
That harp has rung or pipe has blown,
In Lowland vale or Highland glen,
From Tweed to Spey — what marvel, then,
At times unbidden notes should rise, 160
Confusedly bound in memory’s ties,
Entangling, as they rush along,
The war-march with the funeral song ? —
Small ground is now for boding fear ;
Obscure, but safe, we rest us here. 165
My sire, in native virtue great,
Resigning lordship, lands, and state,
Not then to fortune more resigned
Than yonder oak might give the wind ;
The graceful foliage storms may reave, 170
The noble stem they cannot grieve.
For me ” — she stooped, and, looking round,
Plucked a blue harebell from the ground, —
“ For me, whose memory scarce conveys
An image of more splendid days, 175
This little flower that loves the lea
May well my simple emblem be ;
It drinks heaven’s dew as blithe as rose
That in the King’s own garden grows :
And when I place it in my hair, 180
Allan, a bard is bound to swear
He ne’er saw coronet so fair.”
Then playfully the chaplet wild
She wreathed in her dark locks, and smiled.

X

Her smile, her speech, with winning sway, 185
Wiled the old Harper's mood away.
With such a look as hermits throw,
When angels stoop to soothe their woe,
He gazed, till fond regret and pride
Thrilled to a tear, then thus replied : 190
" Loveliest and best ! thou little know'st
The rank, the honors, thou hast lost !
O, might I live to see thee grace,
In Scotland's court, thy birthright place,
To see my favorite's step advance 195
The lightest in the courtly dance,
The cause of every gallant's sigh,
And leading star of every eye,
And theme of every minstrel's art,
The Lady of the Bleeding Heart ! " 200

XI

" Fair dreams are these," the maiden cried, —
Light was her accent, yet she sighed, —
" Yet is this mossy rock to me
Worth splendid chair and canopy ;
Nor would my footstep spring more gay 205
In courtly dance than blithe strathspey,
Nor half so pleased mine ear incline
To royal minstrel's lay as thine.
And then for suitors proud and high,
To bend before my conquering eye, — 210
Thou, flattering bard ! thyself wilt say,
That grim Sir Roderick owns its sway.
The Saxon scourge, Clan-Alpine's pride,
The terror of Loch Lomond's side,
Would, at my suit, thou know'st, delay 215
A Lennox foray — for a day." —

XII

The ancient bard her glee repressed :
" Ill hast thou chosen theme for jest !
For who, through all this western wild,
Named Black Sir Roderick e'er, and smiled ? 220
In Holy-Rood a knight he slew ;
I saw, when back the dirk he drew,
Courtiers give place before the stride
Of the undaunted homicide ;
And since, though outlawed, hath his hand 225
Full sternly kept his mountain land.
Who else dared give — ah ! woe the day,
That I such hated truth should say ! —
The Douglas, like a stricken deer,
Disowned by every noble peer, 230
Even the rude refuge we have here ?
Alas, this wild marauding Chief
Alone might hazard our relief,
And now thy maiden charms expand,
Looks for his guerdon in thy hand ; 235
Full soon may dispensation sought,
To back his suit, from Rome be brought.
Then, though an exile on the hill,
Thy father, as the Douglas, still
Be held in reverence and fear ; 240
And though to Roderick thou'rt so dear
That thou mightst guide with silken thread,
Slave of thy will, this chieftain dread,
Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth refrain !
Thy hand is on a lion's mane." — 245

XIII

" Minstrel," the maid replied, and high
Her father's soul glanced from her eye,
" My debts to Roderick's house I know :
All that a mother could bestow

To Lady Margaret's care I owe,
Since first an orphan in the wild
She sorrowed o'er her sister's child ;
To her brave chieftain son, from ire
Of Scotland's king who shrouds my sire,
A deeper, holier debt is owed ;
And, could I pay it with my blood,
Allan ! Sir Roderick should command
My blood, my life, — but not my hand.
Rather will Ellen Douglas dwell
A votaress in Maronnan's cell ;
Rather through realms beyond the sea,
Seeking the world's cold charity,
Where ne'er was spoke a Scottish word,
And ne'er the name of Douglas heard,
An outcast pilgrim will she rove,
Than wed the man she cannot love.

XIV

"Thou shak'st, good friend, thy tresses gray, —
That pleading look, what can it say
But what I own ? — I grant him brave,
But wild as Bracklinn's thundering wave ;
And generous, — save vindictive mood
Or jealous transport chafe his blood :
I grant him true to friendly band,
As his claymore is to his hand ;
But O ! that very blade of steel
More mercy for a foe would feel :
I grant him liberal, to fling
Among his clan the wealth they bring,
When back by lake and glen they wind,
And in the Lowland leave behind,
Where once some pleasant hamlet stood,
A mass of ashes slaked with blood.

The hand that for my father fought
 I honor, as his daughter ought ;
 But can I clasp it reeking red 285
 From peasants slaughtered in their shed ?
 No ! wildly while his virtues gleam,
 They make his passions darker seem,
 And flash along his spirit high
 Like lightning o'er the midnight sky. 290
 While yet a child,—and children know,
 Instinctive taught, the friend and foe,—
 I shuddered at his brow of gloom,
 His shadowy plaid and sable plume ;
 A maiden grown, I ill could bear 295
 His haughty mien and lordly air :
 But, if thou join'st a suitor's claim,
 In serious mood, to Roderick's name,
 I thrill with anguish ! or, if e'er
 A Douglas knew the word, with fear. 300
 To change such odious theme were best,—
 What think'st thou of our stranger guest ? ” —

XV

“ What think I of him ? — woe the while
 That brought such wanderer to our isle !
 Thy father's battle-brand, of yore 305
 For Tine-man forged by fairy lore,
 What time he leagued, no longer foes,
 His Border spears with Hotspur's bows,
 Did, self-uncabbarded, foreshow
 The footstep of a secret foe. 310
 If courtly spy hath harbored here,
 What may we for the Douglas fear ?
 What for this island, deemed of old
 Clan-Alpine's last and surest hold ?
 If neither spy nor foe, I pray 315

What yet may jealous Roderick say ? —
Nay, wave not thy disdainful head !
Bethink thee of the discord dread
That kindled when at Beltane game
Thou ledst the dance with Malcolm Græme ; 320
Still, though thy sire the peace renewed,
Smoulders in Roderick's breast the feud :
Beware ! — But hark ! what sounds are these ?
My dull ears catch no faltering breeze,
No weeping birch nor aspens wake, 325
Nor breath is dimpling in the lake ;
Still is the canna's hoary beard,
Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard —
And hark again ! some pipe of war
Sends the bold pibroch from afar." 330

XVI

Far up the lengthened lake were spied
Four darkening specks upon the tide,
That, slow enlarging on the view,
Four manned and masted barges grew,
And, bearing downwards from Glengyle, 335
Steered full upon the lonely isle ;
The point of Brianchoil they passed,
And, to the windward as they cast,
Against the sun they gave to shine
The bold Sir Roderick's bannered Pine. 340
Nearer and nearer as they bear,
Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.
Now might you see the tartans brave,
And plaids and plumage dance and wave :
Now see the bonnets sink and rise, 345
As his tough oar the rower plies ;
See, flashing at each sturdy stroke,
The wave ascending into smoke ;

See the proud pipers on the bow,
And mark the gaudy streamers flow 350
From their loud chanters down, and sweep
The furrowed bosom of the deep,
As, rushing through the lake amain,
They plied the ancient Highland strain.

XVII

Ever, as on they bore, more loud 355
And louder rung the pibroch proud.
At first the sounds, by distance tame,
Mellowed along the waters came,
And, lingering long by cape and bay,
Wailed every harsher note away, 360
Then bursting bolder on the ear,
The clan's shrill Gathering they could hear,
Those thrilling sounds that call the might
Of old Clan-Alpine to the fight.
Thick beat the rapid notes, as when 365
The mustering hundreds shake the glen,
And hurrying at the signal dread,
The battered earth returns their tread.
Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
Expressed their merry marching on, 370
Ere peal of closing battle rose,
With mingled outcry, shrieks, and blows;
And mimic din of stroke and ward,
As broadsword upon target jarred;
And groaning pause, ere yet again, 375
Condensed, the battle yelled amain:
The rapid charge, the rallying shout,
Retreat borne headlong into rout,
And bursts of triumph, to declare
Clan-Alpine's conquest — all were there. 380
Nor ended thus the strain, but slow

Sunk in a moan prolonged and low,
And changed the conquering clarion swell
For wild lament o'er those that fell.

XVIII

The war-pipes ceased, but lake and hill 385
Were busy with their echoes still;
And, when they slept, a vocal strain
Bade their hoarse chorus wake again,
While loud a hundred clansmen raise
Their voices in their Chieftain's praise. 390
Each boatman, bending to his oar,
With measured sweep the burden bore,
In such wild cadence as the breeze
Makes through December's leafless trees.
The chorus first could Allan know, 395
"Roderick Vich Alpine, ho! iro!"
And near, and nearer as they rowed
Distinct the martial ditty flowed.

XIX

BOAT SONG

Hail to the Chief who in triumph advances!
Honored and blessed be the ever green Pine! 400
Long may the tree, in his banner that glances,
Flourish, the sheiter and grace of our line!
Heaven send it happy dew,
Earth iend it sap anew,
Gaily to bourgeon and broadly to grow, 405
While every Highland glen
Sends our shout back again,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade; 410

When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf on the
mountain,

The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.

Moored in the rifted rock,

Proof to the tempest's shock,

Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow ;

415

Menteith and Breadalbane, then,

Echo his praise again,

“ Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe ! ”

XX

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen Fruin,

And Bannochar's groans to our slogan replied ;

420

Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,

And the best of Loch Lomond lie dead on her side.

Widow and Saxon maid

Long shall lament our raid,

Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with woe :

425

Lennox and Leven-glen

Shake when they hear again,

“ Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe ! ”

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands !

Stretch to your oars for the ever green Pine !

430

O that the rosebud that graces yon islands

Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine !

O that some seedling gem,

Worthy such noble stem,

Honored and blessed in their shadow might grow !

435

Loud should Clan-Alpine then

Ring from her deepmost glen,

“ Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe ! ”

XXI

With all her joyful female band

Had Lady Margaret sought the strand.

440

Loose on the breeze their tresses flew,
And high their snowy arms they threw,
As echoing back with shrill acclaim,
And chorus wild, the Chieftain's name ;
While, prompt to please, with mother's art, 445
The darling passion of his heart,
The Dame called Ellen to the strand,
To greet her kinsman ere he land :
" Come, loiterer, come ! a Douglas thou,
And shun to wreath a victor's brow ? " 450
Reluctantly and slow, the maid
The unwelcome summoning obeyed,
And when a distant bugle rung,
In the mid-path aside she sprung : —
" List, Allan-bane ! From mainland cast 455
I hear my father's signal blast.
Be ours," she cried, " the skiff to guide,
And waft him from the mountain-side."
Then, like a sunbeam, swift and bright,
She darted to her shallop light, 460
And, eagerly while Roderick scanned,
For her dear form, his mother's band,
The islet far behind her lay,
And she had landed in the bay.

XXII

Some feelings are to mortals given 465
With less of earth in them than heaven ;
And if there be a human tear
From passion's dross refined and clear,
A tear so limpid and so meek
It would not stain an angel's cheek, 470
'Tis that which pious fathers shed
Upon a duteous daughter's head !
And as the Douglas to his breast

His darling Ellen closely pressed,
 Such holy drops her tresses steeped, 475
 Though 'twas an hero's eye that weeped.
 Nor while on Ellen's faltering tongue
 Her filial welcomes crowded hung,
 Marked she that fear — affection's proof —
 Still held a graceful youth aloof; 480
 No! not till Douglas named his name,
 Although the youth was Malcolm Græme.

XXIII

Allan, with wistful look the while,
 Marked Roderick landing on the isle;
 His master piteously he eyed, 485
 Then gazed upon the Chieftain's pride,
 Then dashed with hasty hand away
 From his dimmed eye the gathering spray;
 And Douglas, as his hand he laid
 On Malcolm's shoulder, kindly said: 490
 "Canst thou, young friend, no meaning spy
 In my poor follower's glistening eye?
 I'll tell thee: — he recalls the day
 When in my praise he led the lay
 O'er the arched gate of Bothwell proud, 495
 While many a minstrel answered loud,
 When Percy's Norman pennon, won
 In bloody field, before me shone,
 And twice ten knights, the least a name
 As mighty as yon Chief may claim, 500
 Gracing my pomp, behind me came.
 Yet trust me, Malcolm, not so proud
 Was I of all that marshalled crowd,
 Though the waned crescent owned my might,
 And in my train trooped lord and knight, 505
 Though Blantyre hymned her holiest lays,



BEN LOMOND FROM INCHTAVANNACH

To face p. 40



And Bothwell's bards flung back my praise,
As when this old man's silent tear,
And this poor maid's affection dear,
A welcome give more kind and true 520
Than aught my better fortunes knew.
Forgive, my friend, a father's boast, —
O, it out-beggars all I lost ! ”

XXIV

Delightful praise ! — like summer rose,
That brighter in the dewdrop glows, 515
The bashful maiden's cheek appeared,
For Douglas spoke, and Malcolm heard.
The flush of shame-faced joy to hide,
The hounds, the hawk, her cares divide ;
The loved caresses of the maid 520
The dogs with crouch and whimper paid ;
And, at her whistle, on her hand
The falcon took his favorite stand,
Closed his dark wing, relaxed his eye,
Nor, though unhooded, sought to fly. 525
And, trust, while in such guise she stood,
Like fabled Goddess of the wood,
That if a father's partial thought
O'erweighed her worth and beauty aught,
Well might the lover's judgment fail 530
To balance with a juster scale ;
For with each secret glance he stole,
The fond enthusiast sent his soul.

XXV

Of stature fair, and slender frame,
But firmly knit, was Malcolm Græme. 535
The belted plaid and tartan hose
Did ne'er more graceful limbs disclose ;

His flaxen hair, of sunny hue,
 Curled closely round his bonnet blue.
 Trained to the chase, his eagle eye 540
 The ptarmigan in snow could spy;
 Each pass, by mountain, lake, and heath,
 He knew, through Lennox and Menteith;
 Vain was the bound of dark-brown doe
 When Malcolm bent his sounding bow, 545
 And scarce that doe, though winged with fear,
 Outstripped in speed the mountaineer:
 Right up Ben Lomond could he press,
 And not a sob his toil confess.
 His form accorded with a mind 550
 Lively and ardent, frank and kind;
 A blither heart, till Ellen came,
 Did never love nor sorrow tame;
 It danced as lightsome in his breast
 As played the feather on his crest. 555
 Yet friends, who nearest knew the youth,
 His scorn of wrong, his zeal for truth,
 And bards, who saw his features bold
 When kindled by the tales of old,
 Said, were that youth to manhood grown, 560
 Not long should Roderick Dhu's renown
 Be foremost voiced by mountain fame,
 But quail to that of Malcolm Græme.

XXVI

Now back they wend their watery way,
 And, "O my sire!" did Ellen say, 565
 "Why urge thy chase so far astray?
 And why so late returned? And why?" —
 The rest was in her speaking eye.
 "My child, the chase I follow far,
 'Tis mimicry of noble war; 570

And with that gallant pastime reft
Were all of Douglas I have left.
I met young Malcolm as I strayed
Far eastward, in Glenfinlas' shade;
Nor strayed I safe, for all around 575
Hunters and horsemen scoured the ground.
This youth, though still a royal ward,
Risked life and land to be my guard,
And through the passes of the wood
Guided my steps, not unpursued; 580
And Roderick shall his welcome make,
Despite old spleen, for Douglas' sake.
Then must he seek Strath-Endrick glen,
Nor peril aught for me again."

XXVII

Sir Roderick, who to meet them came, 585
Reddened at sight of Malcolm Græme,
Yet, not in action, word, or eye,
Failed aught in hospitality.
In talk and sport they whiled away
The morning of that summer day; 590
But at high noon a courier light
Held secret parley with the knight,
Whose moody aspect soon declared
That evil were the news he heard.
Deep thought seemed toiling in his head; 595
Yet was the evening banquet made
Ere he assembled round the flame
His mother, Douglas, and the Græme,
And Ellen too; then cast around
His eyes, then fixed them on the ground, 600
As studying phrase that might avail
Best to convey unpleasant tale.

Long with his dagger's hilt he played,
Then raised his haughty brow, and said : —

XXVIII

“ Short be my speech ; — nor time affords, 605
Nor my plain temper, glozing words.
Kinsman and father, — if such name
Douglas vouchsafe to Roderick's claim ;
Mine honored mother ; — Ellen, — why,
My cousin, turn away thine eye ? — 610
And Græme, in whom I hope to know
Full soon a noble friend or foe,
When age shall give thee thy command,
And leading in thy native land, —
List all ! — The King's vindictive pride 615
Boasts to have tamed the Border-side,
Where chiefs, with hound and hawk who came
To share their monarch's sylvan game,
Themselves in bloody toils were snared,
And when the banquet they prepared, 620
And wide their loyal portals flung,
O'er their own gateway struggling hung.
Loud cries their blood from Meggat's mead,
From Yarrow braes and banks of Tweed,
Where the lone streams of Ettrick glide, 625
And from the silver Teviot's side ;
The dales, where martial clans did ride,
Are now one sheep walk, waste and wide.
This tyrant of the Scottish throne,
So faithless and so ruthless known, 630
Now hither comes ; his end the same,
The same pretext of sylvan game.
What grace for Highland Chiefs, judge ye
By fate of Border chivalry.

Yet more ; amid Glenfinlas' green, 635
Douglas, thy stately form was seen.
This by espial sure I know :
Your counsel in the streight I show."

XXIX

Ellen and Margaret fearfully
Sought comfort in each other's eye, 640
Then turned their ghastly look, each one,
This to her sire, that to her son.
The hasty color went and came
In the bold cheek of Malcolm Græme,
But from his glance it well appeared 645
'Twas but for Ellen that he feared ;
While, sorrowful, but undismayed,
The Douglas thus his counsel said :
" Brave Roderick, though the tempest roar,
It may but thunder and pass o'er ; 650
Nor will I here remain an hour,
To draw the lightning on thy bower ;
For well thou know'st, at this gray head
The royal bolt were fiercest sped.
For thee, who, at thy King's command, 655
Canst aid him with a gallant band,
Submission, homage, humbled pride,
Shall turn the Monarch's wrath aside.
Poor remnants of the Bleeding Heart,
Ellen and I will seek apart 660
The refuge of some forest cell,
There, like the hunted quarry, dwell,
Till on the mountain and the moor
The stern pursuit be passed and o'er." —

XXX

" No, by mine honor," Roderick said, 665
" So help me Heaven, and my good blade !

No, never ! Blasted be yon Pine,
My father's ancient crest and mine,
If from its shade in danger part
The lineage of the Bleeding Heart ! 670
Hear my blunt speech : grant me this maid
To wife, thy counsel to mine aid ;
To Douglas, leagued with Roderick Dhu,
Will friends and allies flock enow ;
Like cause of doubt, distrust, and grief, 675
Will bind to us each Western Chief.
When the loud pipes my bridal tell,
The Links of Forth shall hear the knell,
The guards shall start in Stirling's porch ;
And when I light the nuptial torch, 680
A thousand villages in flames
Shall scare the slumbers of King James ! —
Nay, Ellen, blench not thus away,
And, mother, cease these signs, I pray ;
I meant not all my heat might say. — 685
Small need of inroad or of fight,
When the sage Douglas may unite
Each mountain clan in friendly band,
To guard the passes of their land,
Till the foiled King from pathless glen 690
Shall bootless turn him home again."

XXXI

There are who have, at midnight hour,
In slumber scaled a dizzy tower,
And, on the verge that beetled o'er
The ocean tide's incessant roar, 695
Dreamed calmly out their dangerous dream,
Till wakened by the morning beam ;
When, dazzled by the eastern glow,
Such startler cast his glance below,

And saw unmeasured depth around,
And heard unintermitted sound,
And thought the battled fence so frail,
It waved like cobweb in the gale ; —
Amid his senses' giddy wheel,
Did he not desperate impulse feel,
Headlong to plunge himself below,
And meet the worst his fears foreshow ? —
Thus Ellen, dizzy and astound,
As sudden ruin yawned around,
By crossing terrors wildly tossed,
Still for the Douglas fearing most,
Could scarce the desperate thought withstand,
To buy his safety with her hand.

700

705

710

XXXII

Such purpose dread could Malcolm spy
In Ellen's quivering lip and eye,
And eager rose to speak, — but ere
His tongue could hurry forth his fear,
Had Douglas marked the hectic strife,
Where death seemed combating with life ;
For to her cheek, in feverish flood,
One instant rushed the throbbing blood,
Then ebbing back, with sudden sway,
Left its domain as wan as clay.
“ Roderick, enough ! enough ! ” he cried,
“ My daughter cannot be thy bride ;
Not that the blush to wooer dear,
Nor paleness that of maiden fear.
It may not be, — forgive her, Chief,
Nor hazard aught for our relief.
Against his sovereign, Douglas ne'er
Will level a rebellious spear.

715

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725

730

'Twas I that taught his youthful hand
To rein a steed and wield a brand;
I see him yet, the princely boy!
Not Ellen more my pride and joy;
I love him still, despite my wrongs
By hasty wrath and slanderous tongues.
O, seek the grace you well may find,
Without a cause to mine combined!"

735

XXXIII

Twice through the hall the Chieftain strode;
The waving of his tartans broad,
And darkened brow, where wounded pride
With ire and disappointment vied,
Seemed, by the torch's gloomy light,
Like the ill Demon of the night,
Stooping his pinions' shadowy sway
Upon the nighted pilgrim's way:
But, unrequited Love! thy dart
Plunged deepest its envenomed smart,
And Roderick, with thine anguish stung,
At length the hand of Douglas wrung,
While eyes that mocked at tears before
With bitter drops were running o'er.
The death-pangs of long-cherished hope
Scarce in that ample breast had scope,
But, struggling with his spirit proud,
Convulsive heaved its checkered shroud,
While every sob — so mute were all —
Was heard distinctly through the hall.
The son's despair, the mother's look,
Ill might the gentle Ellen brook;
She rose, and to her side there came,
To aid her parting steps, the Græme.

740

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760

XXXIV

Then Roderick from the Douglas broke —
As flashes flame through sable smoke, 768
Kindling its wreaths, long, dark, and low,
To one broad blaze of ruddy glow,
So the deep anguish of despair
Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air.
With stalwart grasp his hand he laid 770
On Malcolm's breast and belted plaid :
" Back, beardless boy ! " he sternly said,
" Back, minion ! holdst thou thus at naught
The lesson I so lately taught ?
This roof, the Douglas, and that maid, 775
Thank thou for punishment delayed." —
Eager as greyhound on his game,
Fiercely with Roderick grappled Græme.
" Perish my name, if aught afford
Its Chieftain safety save his sword ! " 780
Thus as they strove their desperate hand
Griped to the dagger or the brand,
And death had been — but Douglas rose,
And thrust between the struggling foes
His giant strength : — " Chieftains, forego ! 785
I hold the first who strikes my foe. —
Madmen, forbear your frantic jar !
What ! is the Douglas fallen so far,
His daughter's hand is deemed the spoil
Of such dishonorable broil ? " 790
Sullen and slowly they unclasp,
As struck with shame, their desperate grasp,
And each upon his rival glared,
With foot advanced and blade half bared.

XXXV

Ere yet the brands aloft were flung, 795
Margaret on Roderick's mantle hung,

And Malcolm heard his Ellen's scream,
 As faltered through terrific dream.
 Then Roderick plunged in sheath his sword,
 And veiled his wrath in scornful word: 800
 "Rest safe till morning; pity 'twere
 Such cheek should feel the midnight air!
 Then mayst thou to James Stuart tell,
 Roderick will keep the lake and fell,
 Nor lackey with his freeborn clan 805
 The pageant pomp of earthly man.
 More would he of Clan-Alpine know,
 Thou canst our strength and passes show. —
 Malise, what ho!" — his henchman came:
 "Give our safe-conduct to the Græme." 820
 Young Malcolm answered, calm and bold:
 "Fear nothing for thy favorite hold;
 The spot an angel deigned to grace
 Is blessed, though robbers haunt the place.
 Thy churlish courtesy for those 825
 Reserve, who fear to be thy foes.
 As safe to me the mountain way
 At midnight as in blaze of day,
 Though with his boldest at his back
 Even Roderick Dhu beset the track. — 830
 Brave Douglas, — lovely Ellen, — nay,
 Naught here of parting will I say.
 Earth does not hold a lonesome glen
 So secret but we meet again. —
 Chieftain! we too shall find an hour," — 835
 He said, and left the sylvan bower.

XXXVI

Old Allan followed to the strand —
 Such was the Douglas's command —

And anxious told, how, on the morn,
The stern Sir Roderick deep had sworn,
The Fiery Cross should circle o'er
Dale, glen, and valley, down and moor.
Much were the peril to the Græme
From those who to the signal came ;
Far up the lake 'twere safest land,
Himself would row him to the strand.
He gave his counsel to the wind,
While Malcolm did, unheeding, bind,
Round dirk and pouch and broadsword rolled,
His ample plaid in tightened fold,
And stripped his limbs to such array
As best might suit the watery way, —

XXXVII

Then spoke abrupt : "Farewell to thee,
Pattern of old fidelity!"
The Minstrel's hand he kindly pressed, —
"O, could I point a place of rest!
My sovereign holds in ward my land,
My uncle leads my vassal band;
To tame his foes, his friends to aid,
Poor Malcolm has but heart and blade.
Yet, if there be one faithful Græme
Who loves the chieftain of his name,
Not long shall honored Douglas dwell
Like hunted stag in mountain cell;
Nor, ere yon pride-swollen robber dare, —
I may not give the rest to air!
Tell Roderick Dhu I owed him naught,
Not the poor service of a boat,
To waft me to yon mountain-side."
Then plunged he in the flashing tide.

Bold o'er the flood his head he bore,
And stoutly steered him from the shore;
And Allan strained his anxious eye,
Far mid the lake his form to spy,
Darkening across each puny wave,
To which the moon her silver gave.
Fast as the cormorant could skim,
The swimmer plied each active limb;
Then landing in the moonlight dell,
Loud shouted of his weal to tell.
The Minstrel heard the far halloo,
And joyful from the shore withdrew.

865

870

CANTO THIRD

THE GATHERING

I

TIME rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore,
Who danced our infancy upon their knee,
And told our marvelling boyhood legends store
Of their strange ventures happed by land or sea,
How are they blotted from the things that be !
How few, all weak and withered of their force,
Wait on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
To sweep them from our sight ! Time rolls his cease-
less course.

Yet live there still who can remember well,
How, when a mountain chief his bugle blew,
Both field and forest, dingle, cliff, and dell,
And solitary heath, the signal knew ;
And fast the faithful clan around him drew,
What time the warning note was keenly wound,
What time aloft their kindred banner flew,
While clamorous war-pipes yelled the gathering
sound,
And while the Fiery Cross glanced, like a meteor,
round.

II

The Summer dawn's reflected hue
To purple changed Loch Katrine blue ;

Mildly and soft the western breeze
 Just kissed the lake, just stirred the trees,
 And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
 Trembled but dimpled not for joy :
 The mountain-shadows on her breast 25
 Were neither broken nor at rest ;
 In bright uncertainty they lie,
 Like future joys to Fancy's eye.
 The water-lily to the light
 Her chalice reared of silver bright ; 30
 The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
 Begemmed with dew-drops, led her fawn ;
 The gray mist left the mountain-side,
 The torrent showed its glistening pride ;
 Invisible in fleckéd sky 35
 The lark sent down her revelry ;
 The blackbird and the speckled thrush
 Good-morrow gave from brake and bush ;
 In answer cooed the cushat dove
 Her notes of peace and rest and love. 40

III

No thought of peace, no thought of rest,
 Assuaged the storm in Roderick's breast.
 With sheathéd broadsword in his hand,
 Abrupt he paced the islet strand,
 And eyed the rising sun, and laid 45
 His hand on his impatient blade.
 Beneath a rock, his vassals' care
 Was prompt the ritual to prepare,
 With deep and deathful meaning fraught ;
 For such Antiquity had taught 50
 Was preface meet, ere yet abroad
 The Cross of Fire should take its road.

The shrinking band stood oft aghast
At the impatient glance he cast ; —
Such glance the mountain eagle threw, 55
As, from the cliffs of Benvenue,
She spread her dark sails on the wind,
And, high in middle heaven reclined,
With her broad shadow on the lake,
Silenced the warblers of the brake. 60

IV

A heap of withered boughs was piled,
Of juniper and rowan wild,
Mingled with shivers from the oak,
Rent by the lightning's recent stroke.
Brian the Hermit by it stood, 65
Barefooted, in his frock and hood.
His grizzled beard and matted hair
Obscured a visage of despair ;
His naked arms and legs, seamed o'er,
The scars of frantic penance bore. 70
That monk, of savage form and face,
The impending danger of his race
Had drawn from deepest solitude,
Far in Benharrow's bosom rude.
Not his the mien of Christian priest, 75
But Druid's, from the grave released,
Whose hardened heart and eye might brook
On human sacrifice to look ;
And much, 'twas said, of heathen lore
Mixed in the charms he muttered o'er. 80
The hallowed creed gave only worse
And deadlier emphasis of curse.
No peasant sought that Hermit's prayer,
His cave the pilgrim shunned with care ;

The eager huntsman knew his bound,
And in mid chase called off his hound ;
Or if, in lonely glen or strath,
The desert-dweller met his path,
He prayed, and signed the cross between,
While terror took devotion's mien.

V

Of Brian's birth strange tales were told.
His mother watched a midnight fold,
Built deep within a dreary glen,
Where scattered lay the bones of men
In some forgotten battle slain,
And bleached by drifting wind and rain.
It might have tamed a warrior's heart
To view such mockery of his art !
The knot-grass fettered there the hand
Which once could burst an iron band ;
Beneath the broad and ample bone,
That bucklered heart to fear unknown,
A feeble and a timorous guest,
The fieldfare framed her lowly nest ;
There the slow blindworm left his slime
On the fleet limbs that mocked at time ;
And there, too, lay the leader's skull,
Still wreathed with chaplet, flushed and full,
For heath-bell with her purple bloom
Supplied the bonnet and the plume.
All night, in this sad glen, the maid
Sat shrouded in her mantle's shade :
She said no shepherd sought her side,
No hunter's hand her snood untied,
Yet ne'er again to braid her hair
The virgin snood did Alice wear ;



TROSSACHS CHURCH, LOCH ACHRAY AND BEN VENUE

To face p. 56

Nor sought she, from that fatal night,
Or holy church or blessed rite,
But locked her secret in her breast,
And died in travail, unconfessed.

120

VI

Alone, among his young compeers,
Was Brian from his infant years ;
A moody and heart-broken boy,
Estranged from sympathy and joy,
Bearing each taunt which careless tongue
On his mysterious lineage flung.
Whole nights he spent by moonlight pale,
To wood and stream his hap to wail,
Till, frantic, he as truth received
What of his birth the crowd believed,
And sought, in mist and meteor fire,
To meet and know his Phantom Sire !
In vain, to soothe his wayward fate,
The cloister oped her pitying gate ;
In vain the learning of the age
Unclasped the sable-lettered page ;
Even in its treasures he could find
Food for the fever of his mind.
Eager he read whatever tells
Of magic, cabala, and spells,
And every dark pursuit allied
To curious and presumptuous pride ;
Till with fired brain and nerves o'erstrung,
And heart with mystic horrors wrung,
Desperate he sought Benharrow's den,
And hid him from the haunts of men.

125

130

135

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145

VII

The desert gave him visions wild,
Such as might suit the spectre's child.

150

Where with black cliffs the torrents toil,
He watched the wheeling eddies boil,
Till from their foam his dazzled eyes
Beheld the River Demon rise :
The mountain mist took form and limb 155
Of noontide hag or goblin grim ;
The midnight wind came wild and dread,
Swelled with the voices of the dead ;
Far on the future battle-heath
His eye beheld the ranks of death : 160
Thus the lone Seer, from mankind hurled,
Shaped forth a disembodied world.
One lingering sympathy of mind
Still bound him to the mortal kind ;
The only parent he could claim 165
Of ancient Alpine's lineage came.
Late had he heard, in prophet's dream,
The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream ;
Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast
Of charging steeds, careering fast 170
Along Benharrow's shingly side,
Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride ;
The thunderbolt had split the pine, —
All augured ill to Alpine's line.
He girt his loins, and came to show 175
The signals of impending woe,
And now stood prompt to bless or ban,
As bade the Chieftain of his clan.

VIII

'Twas all prepared ; — and from the rock
A goat, the patriarch of the flock, 180
Before the kindling pile was laid,
And pierced by Roderick's ready blade.

Patient the sickening victim eyed
The life-blood ebb in crimson tide
Down his clogged beard and shaggy limb, 185
Till darkness glazed his eyeballs dim.
The grisly priest, with murmuring prayer,
A slender crosslet framed with care,
A cubit's length in measure due ;
The shaft and limbs were rods of yew, 190
Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach wave
Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave,
And, answering Lomond's breezes deep,
Soothe many a chieftain's endless sleep.
The Cross thus formed he held on high, 195
With wasted hand and haggard eye,
And strange and mingled feelings woke,
While his anathema he spoke : —

IX

“ Woe to the clansman who shall view
This symbol of sepulchral yew, 200
Forgetful that its branches grew
Where weep the heavens their holiest dew
On Alpine's dwelling low !
Deserter of his Chieftain's trust,
He ne'er shall mingle with their dust, 205
But, from his sires and kindred thrust,
Each clansman's execration just
Shall doom him wrath and woe.”
He paused ; — the word the vassals took,
With forward step and fiery look, 210
On high their naked brands they shook,
Their clattering targets wildly strook ;
And first in murmur low,
Then, like the billow in his course,
That far to seaward finds his source, 215

And flings to shore his mustered force,
Burst with loud roar their answer hoarse,

“Woe to the traitor, woe !”

Ben-an’s gray scalp the accents knew,
The joyous wolf from covert drew,
The exulting eagle screamed afar, —
They knew the voice of Alpine’s war.

220

X

The shout was hushed on lake and fell,
The Monk resumed his muttered spell :
Dismal and low its accents came,
The while he scathed the Cross with flame ;
And the few words that reached the air,
Although the holiest name was there,
Had more of blasphemy than prayer.

225

But when he shook above the crowd
Its kindled points, he spoke aloud : —

230

“Woe to the wretch who fails to rear
At this dread sign the ready spear !
For, as the flames this symbol sear,
His home, the refuge of his fear,

235

A kindred fate shall know ;
Far o’er its roof the volumed flame
Clan-Alpine’s vengeance shall proclaim,
While maids and matrons on his name
Shall call down wretchedness and shame,

240

And infamy and woe.”

Then rose the cry of females, shrill
As goshawk’s whistle on the hill,
Denouncing misery and ill,
Mingled with childhood’s babbling trill

245

Of curses stammered slow ;
Answering with imprecation dread,
“Sunk be his home in embers red !

And cursed be the meanest shed
That e'er shall hide the houseless head

230

We doom to want and woe ! ”

A sharp and shrieking echo gave,
Coir-Uriskin, thy goblin cave !

And the gray pass where birches wave
On Beala-nam-bo.

235

XI

Then deeper paused the priest anew,
And hard his laboring breath he drew,
While, with set teeth and clenched hand,
And eyes that glowed like fiery brand,
He meditated curse more dread,
And deadlier, on the clansman's head
Who, summoned to his chieftain's aid,
The signal saw and disobeyed.

260

The crosslet's points of sparkling wood
He quenched among the bubbling blood,
And, as again the sign he reared,
Hollow and hoarse his voice was heard :

265

“ When flits this Cross from man to man,
Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan,
Burst be the ear that fails to heed !
Palsied the foot that shuns to speed !

270

May ravens tear the careless eyes,
Wolves make the coward heart their prize !
As sinks that blood-stream in the earth,
So may his heart's-blood drench his hearth !
As dies in hissing gore the spark,
Quench thou his light, Destruction dark !
And be the grace to him denied,
Bought by this sign to all beside ! ”

275

He ceased ; no echo gave again
The murmur of the deep Amen.

280

XII

Then Roderick with impatient look
From Brian's hand the symbol took :
"Speed, Malise, speed!" he said, and gave
The crosslet to his henchman brave. 285
"The muster-place be Lanrick mead —
Instant the time — speed, Malise, speed!"
Like heath-bird, when the hawks pursue,
A barge across Loch Katrine flew :
High stood the henchman on the prow ; 290
So rapidly the barge-men row,
The bubbles, where they launched the boat,
Were all unbroken and afloat,
Dancing in foam and ripple still,
When it had neared the mainland hill ; 295
And from the silver beach's side
Still was the prow three fathom wide,
When lightly bounded to the land
The messenger of blood and brand.

XIII

Speed, Malise, speed! the dun deer's hide 300
On fleeter foot was never tied.
Speed, Malise, speed! such cause of haste
Thine active sinews never braced.
Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy breast,
Burst down like torrent from its crest ; 305
With short and springing footstep pass
The trembling bog and false morass ;
Across the brook like roebuck bound,
And thread the brake like questing hound ;
The crag is high, the scaur is deep, 310
Yet shrink not from the desperate leap :
Parched are thy burning lips and brow,
Yet by the fountain pause not now ;

Herald of battle, fate, and fear,
Stretch onward in thy fleet career ! 325
The wounded hind thou track'st not now,
Pursuest not maid through greenwood bough,
Nor pliest thou now thy flying pace
With rivals in the mountain race ;
But danger, death, and warrior deed 330
Are in thy course — speed, Malise, speed !

XIV

Fast as the fatal symbol flies,
In arms the huts and hamlets rise ;
From winding glen, from upland brown,
They poured each hardy tenant down. 335
Nor slack'd the messenger his pace ;
He showed the sign, he named the place,
And, pressing forward like the wind,
Left clamor and surprise behind.
The fisherman forsook the strand, 339
The swarthy smith took dirk and brand ;
With changed cheer, the mower blithe
Left in the half-cut swath his scythe ;
The herds without a keeper strayed,
The plough was in mid-furrow stayed, 343
The falconer tossed his hawk away,
The hunter left the stag at bay ;
Prompt at the signal of alarms,
Each son of Alpine rushed to arms ;
So swept the tumult and affray 349
Along the margin of Achray.
Alas, thou lovely lake ! that e'er
Thy banks should echo sounds of fear !
The rocks, the bosky thickets, sleep
So stilly on thy bosom deep, 355

The lark's blithe carol from the cloud
Seems for the scene too gayly loud.

XV

Speed, Malise, speed ! The lake is past,
Duncraggan's huts appear at last,
And peep, like moss-grown rocks, half seen, 350
Half hidden in the copse so green ;
There mayst thou rest, thy labor done,
Their lord shall speed the signal on. —
As stoops the hawk upon his prey,
The henchman shot him down the way. 355
What woful accents load the gale ?
The funeral yell, the female wail !
A gallant hunter's sport is o'er,
A valiant warrior fights no more.
Who, in the battle or the chase, 360
At Roderick's side shall fill his place ! —
Within the hall, where torch's ray
Supplies the excluded beams of day,
Lies Duncan on his lowly bier,
And o'er him streams his widow's tear. 365
His stripling son stands mournful by,
His youngest weeps, but knows not why ;
The village maids and matrons round
The dismal coronach resound.

XVI

CORONACH

He is gone on the mountain, 370
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font, reappearing,
From the rain-drops shall borrow, 375

But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory. 380
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing,
When blighting was nearest. 385

Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain, 390
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and forever!

XVII

See Stumah, who, the bier beside,
His master's corpse with wonder eyed, 395
Poor Stumah! whom his least halloo
Could send like lightning o'er the dew,
Bristles his crest, and points his ears,
As if some stranger step he hears.
'Tis not a mourner's muffled tread, 400
Who comes to sorrow o'er the dead,
But headlong haste or deadly fear
Urge the precipitate career.
All stand aghast: — unheeding all,
The henchman bursts into the hall; 405

Before the dead man's bier he stood,
Held forth the Cross besmeared with blood;
"The muster-place is Lanrick mead;
Speed forth the signal! clansmen, speed!"

XVIII

Angus, the heir of Duncan's line, 430
Sprung forth and seized the fatal sign.
In haste the stripling to his side
His father's dirk and broadsword tied;
But when he saw his mother's eye
Watch him in speechless agony, 435
Back to her opened arms he flew,
Pressed on her lips a fond adieu, —
"Alas!" she sobbed, — "and yet be gone,
And speed thee forth, like Duncan's son!"
One look he cast upon the bier, 440
Dashed from his eye the gathering tear,
Breathed deep to clear his laboring breast,
And tossed aloft his bonnet crest,
Then, like the high-bred colt when, freed,
First he essays his fire and speed, 445
He vanished, and o'er moor and moss
Sped forward with the Fiery Cross.
Suspended was the widow's tear
While yet his footsteps she could hear;
And when she marked the henchman's eye 450
Wet with unwonted sympathy,
"Kinsman," she said, "his race is run
That should have sped thine errand on;
The oak has fallen, — the sapling bough
Is all Duncraggan's shelter now. 455
Yet trust I well, his duty done,
The orphan's God will guard my son. —

And you, in many a danger true,
At Duncan's hest your blades that drew,
To arms, and guard that orphan's head ! 440
Let babes and women wail the dead."
Then weapon-clang and martial call
Resounded through the funeral hall,
While from the walls the attendant band
Snatched sword and targe with hurried hand 445
And short and flitting energy
Glanced from the mourner's sunken eye,
As if the sounds to warrior dear
Might rouse her Duncan from his bier.
But faded soon that borrowed force ; 450
Grief claimed his right, and tears their course.

XIX

Benledi saw the Cross of Fire,
It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire.
O'er dale and hill the summons flew,
Nor rest nor pause young Angus knew ; 455
The tear that gathered in his eye
He left the mountain-breeze to dry ;
Until, where Teith's young waters roll
Betwixt him and a wooded knoll
That graced the sable strath with green, 460
The chapel of Saint Bride was seen.
Swoln was the stream, remote the bridge,
But Angus paused not on the edge ;
Though the dark waves danced dizzily,
Though reeled his sympathetic eye, 465
He dashed amid the torrent's roar :
His right hand high the crosslet bore,
His left the pole ax grasped, to guide
And stay his footing in the tide.

He stumbled twice, — the foam splashed high; 470
With hoarser swell the stream raced by;
And had he fallen, — forever there,
Farewell Duncraggan's orphan heir!
But still, as if in parting life,
Firmer he grasped the Cross of strife, 475
Until the opposing bank he gained,
And up the chapel pathway strained.

XX

A blithesome rout that morning-tide
Had sought the chapel of Saint Bride.
Her troth Tombea's Mary gave 480
To Norman, heir of Armandave,
And, issuing from the Gothic arch,
The bridal now resumed their march.
In rude but glad procession came
Bonneted sire and coif-clad dame; 485
And plaided youth, with jest and jeer,
Which snooded maiden would not hear;
And children, that, unwitting why,
Lent the gay shout their shrilly cry;
And minstrels, that in measures vied 490
Before the young and bonny bride,
Whose downcast eye and cheek disclose
The tear and blush of morning rose.
With virgin step and bashful hand
She held the kerchief's snowy band. 495
The gallant bridegroom by her side
Beheld his prize with victor's pride,
And the glad mother in her ear
Was closely whispering word of cheer.

XXI

Who meets them at the churchyard gate? 500
The messenger of fear and fate!

Haste in his hurried accent lies,
And grief is swimming in his eyes.
All dripping from the recent flood,
Panting and travel-soiled he stood, 505
The fatal sign of fire and sword
Held forth, and spoke the appointed word :
“ The muster-place is Lanrick mead ;
Speed forth the signal ! Norman, speed ! ”
And must he change so soon the hand 520
Just linked to his by holy band,
For the fell Cross of blood and brand ?
And must the day so blithe that rose,
And promised rapture in the close,
Before its setting hour, divide 525
The bridegroom from the plighted bride ?
O fatal doom ! — it must ! it must !
Clan-Alpine’s cause, her Chieftain’s trust,
Her summons dread, brook no delay ;
Stretch to the race, — away ! away ! 530

XXII

Yet slow he laid his plaid aside,
And lingering eyed his lovely bride,
Until he saw the starting tear
Speak woe he might not stop to cheer ;
Then, trusting not a second look, 525
In haste he sped him up the brook,
Nor backward glanced till on the heath
Where Lubnaig’s lake supplies the Teith. —
What in the racer’s bosom stirred ?
The sickening pang of hope deferred, 530
And memory with a torturing train
Of all his morning visions vain.
Mingled with love’s impatience, came
The manly thirst for martial fame ;

The stormy joy of mountaineers 535
Ere yet they rush upon the spears ;
And zeal for Clan and Chieftain burning,
And hope, from well-fought field returning,
With war's red honors on his crest,
To clasp his Mary to his breast. 540
Stung by such thoughts, o'er bank and brae,
Like fire from flint he glanced away,
While high resolve and feeling strong
Burst into voluntary song.

XXIII

SONG

The heath this night must be my bed, 545
The bracken curtain for my head,
My lullaby the warder's tread,
Far, far, from love and thee, Mary.
To-morrow eve, more stilly laid,
My couch may be my bloody plaid, 550
My vesper song thy wail, sweet maid !
It will not waken me, Mary !

I may not, dare not, fancy now
The grief that clouds thy lovely brow,
I dare not think upon thy vow, 555
And all it promised me, Mary.
No fond regret must Norman know ;
When bursts Clan-Alpine on the foe,
His heart must be like bended bow,
His foot like arrow free, Mary. 560

A time will come with feeling fraught,
For, if I fall in battle fought,
Thy hapless lover's dying thought
Shall be a thought on thee, Mary.

And if returned from conquered foes, 565
How blithely will the evening close,
How sweet the linnet sing repose,
To my young bride and me, Mary !

XXIV

Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze, 570
Rushing in conflagration strong
Thy deep ravines and dells along,
Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,
And reddening the dark lakes below;
Nor faster speeds it, nor so far, 575
As o'er thy heaths the voice of war.
The signal roused to martial coil
The sullen margin of Loch Voil,
Waked still Loch Doine, and to the source
Alarmed, Balvaig, thy swampy course ; 580
Thence southward turned its rapid road
Adown Strath-Gartney's valley broad,
Till rose in arms each man might claim
A portion in Clan-Alpine's name,
From the gray sire, whose trembling hand 585
Could hardly buckle on his brand,
To the raw boy, whose shaft and bow
Were yet scarce terror to the crow.
Each valley, each sequestered glen,
Mustered its little horde of men, 590
That met as torrents from the height
In Highland dales their streams unite,
Still gathering, as they pour along,
A voice more loud, a tide more strong,
Till at the rendezvous they stood 595
By hundreds prompt for blows and blood,

Each trained to arms since life began,
Owning no tie but to his clan,
No oath but by his chieftain's hand,
No law but Roderick Dhu's command. 600

XXV

That summer morn had Roderick Dhu
Surveyed the skirts of Benvenue,
And sent his scouts o'er hill and heath,
To view the frontiers of Menteith. 605
All backward came with news of truce ;
Still lay each martial Græme and Bruce,
In Rednock courts no horsemen wait,
No banner waved on Cardross gate,
On Duchray's towers no beacon shone,
Nor scared the herons from Loch Con ; 610
All seemed at peace. — Now wot ye why
The Chieftain with such anxious eye,
Ere to the muster he repair,
This western frontier scanned with care ? —
In Benvenue's most darksome cleft, 615
A fair though cruel pledge was left ;
For Douglas, to his promise true,
That morning from the isle withdrew,
And in a deep sequestered dell
Had sought a low and lonely cell. 620
By many a bard in Celtic tongue
Has Coir-nan-Uriskin been sung ;
A softer name the Saxons gave,
And called the grot the Goblin Cave.

XXVI

It was a wild and strange retreat, 625
As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.
The dell, upon the mountain's crest,
Yawned like a gash on warrior's breast ;

Its trench had stayed full many a rock,
Hurled by primeval earthquake shock 630
From Benvenue's gray summit wild,
And here, in random ruin piled,
They frowned incumbent o'er the spot,
And formed the rugged sylvan grot.
The oak and birch with mingled shade 635
At noontide there a twilight made,
Unless when short and sudden shone
Some straggling beam on cliff or stone,
With such a glimpse as prophet's eye
Gains on thy depth, Futurity. 640
No murmur waked the solemn still,
Save tinkling of a fountain rill;
But when the wind chafed with the lake,
A sullen sound would upward break,
With dashing hollow voice, that spoke 645
The incessant war of wave and rock.
Suspended cliffs with hideous sway
Seemed nodding o'er the cavern gray.
From such a den the wolf had sprung,
In such the wildcat leaves her young; 650
Yet Douglas and his daughter fair
Sought for a space their safety there.
Gray Superstition's whisper dread
Debarred the spot to vulgar tread;
For there, she said, did fays resort, 655
And satyrs hold their sylvan court,
By moonlight tread their mystic maze,
And blast the rash beholder's gaze.

XXVII

Now eve, with western shadows long,
Floated on Katrine bright and strong, 660

When Roderick with a chosen few
Repassed the heights of Benvenue.
Above the Goblin cave they go,
Through the wild pass of Beal-nam-bo ;
The prompt retainers speed before, 665
To launch the shallop from the shore,
For 'cross Loch Katrine lies his way
To view the passes of Achray,
And place his clansmen in array.
Yet lags the Chief in musing mind, 670
Unwonted sight, his men behind.
A single page, to bear his sword,
Alone attended on his lord ;
The rest their way through thickets break,
And soon await him by the lake. 675
It was a fair and gallant sight,
To view them from the neighboring height,
By the low-levelled sunbeam's light !
For strength and stature, from the clan
Each warrior was a chosen man, 680
As even afar might well be seen,
By their proud step and martial mien.
Their feathers dance, their tartans float,
Their targets gleam, as by the boat
A wild and warlike group they stand, 685
That well became such mountain-strand.

XXVIII

Their Chief with step reluctant still
Was lingering on the craggy hill,
Hard by where turned apart the road
To Douglas's obscure abode. 690
It was but with that dawning morn
That Roderick Dhu had proudly sworn

To drown his love in war's wild roar,
 Nor think of Ellen Douglas more ;
 But he who stems a stream with sand, 695
 And fetters flame with flaxen band,
 Has yet a harder task to prove, —
 By firm resolve to conquer love !
 Eve finds the Chief, like restless ghost,
 Still hovering near his treasure lost ; 700
 For though his haughty heart deny
 A parting meeting to his eye,
 Still fondly strains his anxious ear
 The accents of her voice to hear,
 And inly did he curse the breeze 705
 That waked to sound the rustling trees.
 But hark ! what mingles in the strain ?
 It is the harp of Allan-bane,
 That wakes its measure slow and high,
 Attuned to sacred minstrelsy. 710
 What melting voice attends the strings ?
 'Tis Ellen, or an angel, sings.

XXIX

HYMN TO THE VIRGIN

Ave Maria ! maiden mild !

Listen to a maiden's prayer !
 Thou canst hear though from the wild, 715
 Thou canst save amid despair.
 Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,
 Though banished, outcast, and reviled —
 Maiden ! hear a maiden's prayer ;
 Mother, hear a suppliant child ! 720

Ave Maria !

Ave Maria ! undefiled !

The flinty couch we now must share

Shall seem with down of eider piled,
 If thy protection hover there.
 The murky cavern's heavy air
 Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled; 725
 Then, Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer,
 Mother, list a suppliant child!
Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! stainless styled!
 Foul demons of the earth and air, 730
 From this their wonted haunt exiled,
 Shall flee before thy presence fair.
 We bow us to our lot of care,
 Beneath thy guidance reconciled:
 Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer, 735
 And for a father hear a child!
Ave Maria!

XXX

Died on the harp the closing hymn, —
 Unmoved in attitude and limb,
 As listening still, Clan-Alpine's lord
 Stood leaning on his heavy sword, 740
 Until the page with humble sign
 Twice pointed to the sun's decline.
 Then while his plaid he round him cast,
 "It is the last time — 'tis the last,"
 He muttered thrice, — "the last time e'er 745
 That angel-voice shall Roderick hear!"
 It was a goading thought, — his stride
 Hied hastier down the mountain-side;
 Sullen he flung him in the boat,
 An instant 'cross the lake it shot. 750
 They landed in that silvery bay,
 And eastward held their hasty way,

Till, with the latest beams of light,
The band arrived on Lanrick height,
Where mustered in the vale below
Clan-Alpine's men in martial show.

755

XXXI

A various scene the clansmen made :
Some sat, some stood, some slowly strayed,
But most, with mantles folded round,
Were couched to rest upon the ground,
Scarce to be known by curious eye
From the deep heather where they lie,
So well was matched the tartan screen
With heath-bell dark and brackens green ;
Unless where, here and there, a blade
Or lance's point a glimmer made,
Like glow-worm twinkling through the shade.
But when, advancing through the gloom,
They saw the Chieftain's eagle plume,
Their shout of welcome, shrill and wide,
Shook the steep mountain's steady side.
Thrice it arose, and lake and fell
Three times returned the martial yell ;
It died upon Bochastle's plain,
And Silence claimed her evening reign.

760

765

770

775

CANTO FOURTH

THE PROPHECY

I

"THE rose is fairest when 'tis budding new,
And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;
The rose is sweetest washed with morning dew,
And love is loveliest when embalmed in tears.
O wilding rose, whom fancy thus endears,
I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave,
Emblem of hope and love through future years!"
Thus spoke young Norman, heir of Armandave,
What time the sun arose on Vennachar's broad wave.

II

Such fond conceit, half said, half sung,
Love prompted to the bridegroom's tongue.
All while he stripped the wild-rose spray,
His ax and bow beside him lay,
For on a pass 'twixt lake and wood
A wakeful sentinel he stood.
Hark! — on the rock a footstep rung,
And instant to his arms he sprung.
"Stand, or thou diest! — What, Malise? — soon
Art thou returned from Braes of Doune.
By thy keen step and glance I know,
Thou bring'st us tidings of the foe." —
For while the Fiery Cross hied on,
On distant scout had Malise gone. —
"Where sleeps the Chief?" the henchman said.
"Apart, in yonder misty glade;

To his lone couch I'll be your guide." —
Then called a slumberer by his side,
And stirred him with his slackened bow, —
"Up, up, Glentarkin! rouse thee, ho!
We seek the Chieftain; on the track
Keep eagle watch till I come back."

30

III

Together up the pass they sped:
"What of the foeman?" Norman said. —
"Varying reports from near and far;
This certain, — that a band of war
Has for two days been ready boune,
At prompt command to march from Doune;
King James the while, with princely powers,
Holds revelry in Stirling towers.
Soon will this dark and gathering cloud
Speak on our glens in thunder loud.
Inured to bide such bitter bout,
The warrior's plaid may bear it out;
But, Norman, how wilt thou provide
A shelter for thy bonny bride?" —
"What! know ye not that Roderick's care
To the lone isle hath caused repair
Each maid and matron of the clan,
And every child and aged man
Unfit for arms; and given his charge,
Nor skiff nor shallop, boat nor barge,
Upon these lakes shall float at large,
But all beside the islet moor,
That such dear pledge may rest secure?" —

35

40

45

50

IV

"'Tis well advised, — the Chieftain's plan
Bespeaks the father of his clan.

55

But wherefore sleeps Sir Roderick Dhu
Apart from all his followers true?"

"It is because last evening-tide
Brian an augury hath tried, 60
Of that dread kind which must not be
Unless in dread extremity,
The Taghairm called; by which, afar,
Our sires foresaw the events of war.
Duncraggan's milk-white bull they slew," — 65

MALISE

"Ah! well the gallant brute I knew!
The choicest of the prey we had
When swept our merry-men Gallangad.
His hide was snow, his horns were dark,
His red eye glowed like fiery spark; 70
So fierce, so tameless, and so fleet,
Sore did he cumber our retreat,
And kept our stoutest kerns in awe,
Even at the pass of Beal 'maha.
But steep and flinty was the road, 75
And sharp the hurrying pikeman's goad,
And when we came to Dennan's Row
A child might scathless stroke his brow."

V

NORMAN

"That bull was slain; his reeking hide
They stretched the cataract beside, 80
Whose waters their wild tumult toss
Adown the black and craggy boss
Of that huge cliff whose ample verge
Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.
Couched on a shelf beneath its brink, 85
Close where the thundering torrents sink,

Rocking beneath their headlong sway,
And drizzled by the ceaseless spray,
Midst groan of rock and roar of stream,
The wizard waits prophetic dream. 90
Nor distant rests the Chief; — but hush!
See, gliding slow through mist and bush,
The hermit gains yon rock, and stands
To gaze upon our slumbering bands.
Seems he not, Malise, like a ghost, 95
That hovers o'er a slaughtered host?
Or raven on the blasted oak,
That, watching while the deer is broke,
His morsel claims with sullen croak?"

MALISE

"Peace! peace! to other than to me 100
Thy words were evil augury;
But still I hold Sir Roderick's blade
Clan-Alpine's omen and her aid,
Not aught that, gleaned from heaven or hell,
Yon fiend-begotten Monk can tell. 105
The Chieftain joins him, see — and now
Together they descend the brow."

VI

And, as they came, with Alpine's Lord
The Hermit Monk held solemn word: —
"Roderick! it is a fearful strife, 110
For man endowed with mortal life,
Whose shroud of sentient clay can still
Feel feverish pang and fainting chill,
Whose eye can stare in stony trance,
Whose hair can rouse like warrior's lance, — 115
'Tis hard for such to view, unfurled,
The curtain of the future world.

Yet, witness every quaking limb,
My sunken pulse, mine eyeballs dim,
My soul with harrowing anguish torn, 120
This for my Chieftain have I borne! —
The shapes that sought my fearful couch
A human tongue may ne'er avouch;
No mortal man — save he, who, bred
Between the living and the dead, 125
Is gifted beyond nature's law —
Had e'er survived to say he saw.
At length the fateful answer came
In characters of living flame!
Not spoke in word, nor blazed in scroll, 130
But borne and branded on my soul: —
WHICH SPILLS THE FOREMOST FOEMAN'S LIFE,
THAT PARTY CONQUERS IN THE STRIFE."

VII

"Thanks, Brian, for thy zeal and care!
Good is thine augury, and fair. 135
Clan-Alpine ne'er in battle stood
But first our broadswords tasted blood.
A surer victim still I know,
Self-offered to the auspicious blow:
A spy has sought my land this morn, — 140
No eve shall witness his return!
My followers guard each pass's mouth,
To east, to westward, and to south;
Red Murdoch, bribed to be his guide,
Has charge to lead his steps aside, 145
Till in deep path or dingle brown
He light on those shall bring him down. —
But see, who comes his news to show!
Malise! what tidings of the foe?"

VIII

“At Doune, o’er many a spear and glaive 150
Two Barons proud their banners wave.
I saw the Moray’s silver star,
And marked the sable pale of Mar.”
“By Alpine’s soul, high tidings those !
I love to hear of worthy foes. 155
When move they on ? ” “To-morrow’s noon
Will see them here for battle bouné.”
“Then shall it see a meeting stern !
But, for the place, — say, couldst thou learn
Nought of the friendly clans of Earn ? 160
Strengthened by them, we well might bide
The battle on Benledi’s side.
Thou couldst not ? — well ! Clan-Alpine’s men
Shall man the Trosachs’ shaggy glen ;
Within Loch Katrine’s gorge we’ll fight, 165
All in our maids’ and matrons’ sight,
Each for his hearth and household fire,
Father for child, and son for sire,
Lover for maid beloved ! — But why —
Is it the breeze affects mine eye ? 170
Or dost thou come, ill-omened tear !
A messenger of doubt or fear ?
No ! sooner may the Saxon lance
Unfix Benledi from his stance,
Than doubt or terror can pierce through 175
The unyielding heart of Roderick Dhu !
’Tis stubborn as his trusty targe.
Each to his post ! — all know their charge.”
The pibroch sounds, the bands advance,
The broadswords gleam, the banners dance, 180
Obedient to the Chieftain’s glance. —
I turn me from the martial roar,
And seek Coir-Uriskin once more.

IX.

Where is the Douglas ? — he is gone ;
 And Ellen sits on the gray stone 185
 Fast by the cave, and makes her moan,
 While vainly Allan's words of cheer
 Are poured on her unheeding ear.
 " He will return — dear lady, trust ! —
 With joy return ; — he will — he must. 190
 Well was it time to seek afar
 Some refuge from impending war,
 When e'en Clan-Alpine's rugged swarm
 Are cowed by the approaching storm.
 I saw their boats with many a light, 195
 Floating the livelong yesternight,
 Shifting like flashes darted forth
 By the red streamers of the north ;
 I marked at morn how close they ride,
 Thick moored by the lone islet's side, 200
 Like wild ducks couching in the fen
 When stoops the hawk upon the glen.
 Since this rude race dare not abide
 The peril on the mainland side,
 Shall not thy noble father's care 205
 Some safe retreat for thee prepare ? "

X

ELLEN

" No, Allan, no ! Pretext so kind
 My wakeful terrors could not blind.
 When in such tender tone, yet grave,
 Douglas a parting blessing gave, 210
 The tear that glistened in his eye
 Drowned not his purpose fixed and high.
 My soul, though feminine and weak,
 Can image his ; e'en as the lake,

Itself disturbed by slightest stroke,
Reflects the invulnerable rock. 215
He hears report of battle rife,
He deems himself the cause of strife.
I saw him redden when the theme
Turned, Allan, on thine idle dream 220
Of Malcolm Græme in fetters bound,
Which I, thou saidst, about him wound.
Think'st thou he trowed thine omen aught?
O no! 'twas apprehensive thought
For the kind youth, — for Roderick too — 225
Let me be just — that friend so true;
In danger both, and in our cause!
Minstrel, the Douglas dare not pause.
Why else that solemn warning given,
'If not on earth, we meet in heaven!' 230
Why else, to Cambus-kenneth's fane,
If e'er return him not again,
Am I to hie and make me known?
Alas! he goes to Scotland's throne,
Buys his friends' safety with his own; 235
He goes to do — what I had done,
Had Douglas' daughter been his son!"

XI

"Nay, lovely Ellen! — dearest, nay!
If aught should his return delay,
He only named yon holy fane 240
As fitting place to meet again.
Be sure he's safe; and for the Græme, —
Heaven's blessing on his gallant name! —
My visioned sight may yet prove true,
Nor bode of ill to him or you. 245
When did my gifted dream beguile?
Think of the stranger at the isle,

And think upon the harpings slow
That presaged this approaching woe !
Sooth was my prophecy of fear ; 250
Believe it when it augurs cheer.
Would we had left this dismal spot !
Ill luck still haunts a fairy grot.
Of such a wondrous tale I know —
Dear lady, change that look of woe, 255
My harp was wont thy grief to cheer.”

ELLEN

“ Well, be it as thou wilt ; I hear,
But cannot stop the bursting tear.”
The Minstrel tried his simple art,
But distant far was Ellen’s heart. 260

XII

BALLAD

ALICE BRAND

Merry it is in the good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in
cry,
And the hunter’s horn is ringing.

“ O Alice Brand, my native land 265
Is lost for love of you ;
And we must hold by wood and wold,
As outlaws wont to do.

“ O Alice, ’twas all for thy locks so bright,
And ’twas all for thine eyes so blue, 270
That on the night of our luckless flight
Thy brother bold I slew.

"Now must I teach to hew the beech
The hand that held the glaive,
For leaves to spread our lowly bed,
And stakes to fence our cave. 275

"And for vest of pall, thy fingers small,
That wont on harp to stray,
A cloak must shear from the slaughtered deer,
To keep the cold away." 280

"O Richard! if my brother died,
'Twas but a fatal chance;
For darkling was the battle tried,
And fortune sped the lance.

"If pall and vair no more I wear, 285
Nor thou the crimson sheen,
As warm, we'll say, is the russet gray,
As gay the forest-green.

"And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
And lost thy native land, 290
Still Alice has her own Richard,
And he his Alice Brand."

XIII

BALLAD CONTINUED .

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwood;
So blithe Lady Alice is singing;
On the beech's pride, and oak's brown side, 295
Lord Richard's ax is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
Who woned within the hill,—
Like wind in the porch of a ruined church,
His voice was ghostly shrill. 300

“Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,
Our moonlight circle’s screen?
Or who comes here to chase the deer,
Beloved of our Elfin Queen?
Or who may dare on wold to wear
The fairies’ fatal green?”

305

“Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,
For thou wert christened man;
For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
For muttered word or ban.

310

“Lay on him the curse of the withered heart,
The curse of the sleepless eye;
Till he wish and pray that his life would part,
Nor yet find leave to die.”

XIV

BALLAD CONTINUED

’Tis merry, ’tis merry, in good greenwood,
Though the birds have stilled their singing;
The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
And Richard is fagots bringing.

315

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,
Before Lord Richard stands,
And, as he crossed and blessed himself,
“I fear not sign,” quoth the grisly elf,
“That is made with bloody hands.”

320

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
That woman void of fear,—
“And if there’s blood upon his hand,
’Tis but the blood of deer.”

325

“ Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood !
It cleaves unto his hand,
The stain of thine own kindly blood,
The blood of Ethert Brand.”

330

Then forward stepped she, Alice Brand,
And made the holy sign, —
“ And if there’s blood on Richard’s hand,
A spotless hand is mine.

335

“ And I conjure thee, demon elf,
By Him whom demons fear,
To show us whence thou art thyself,
And what thine errand here ? ”

XV

BALLAD CONTINUED

“ ’Tis merry, ’tis merry, in Fairy-land,
When fairy birds are singing,
When the court doth ride by their monarch’s side,
With bit and bridle ringing :

340

“ And gaily shines the Fairy-land —
But all is glistening show,
Like the idle gleam that December’s beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

345

“ And fading, like that varied gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady seem,
And now like dwarf and ape.

350

“ It was between the night and day,
When the Fairy King has power,

That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And 'twixt life and death was snatched away 355
To the joyless Elfin bower.

“ But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mould,
As fair a form as thine.” 360

She crossed him once — she crossed him twice —
That lady was so brave ;
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave.

She crossed him thrice, that lady bold ; 365
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish mould,
Her brother, Ethert Brand !

Merry it is in good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing, 370
But merrier were they in Dunfermline gray,
When all the bells were ringing.

XVI

Just as the minstrel sounds were stayed,
A stranger climbed the steepy glade ;
His martial step, his stately mien, 375
His hunting-suit of Lincoln green,
His eagle glance, remembrance claims —
'Tis Snowdoun's Knight, 'tis James Fitz-James.
Ellen beheld as in a dream,
Then, starting, scarce suppressed a scream : 380
“ O stranger ! in such hour of fear
What evil hap has brought thee here ? ”

“ An evil hap how can it be
That bids me look again on thee ?
By promise bound, my former guide 385
Met me betimes this morning-tide,
And marshalled over bank and bourne
The happy path of my return.”
“ The happy path ! — what ! said he naught
Of war, of battle to be fought, 390
Of guarded pass ? ” “ No, by my faith !
Nor saw I aught could augur scathe.”
“ O haste thee, Allan, to the kern :
Yonder his tartans I discern ;
Learn thou his purpose, and conjure 395
That he will guide the stranger sure ! —
What prompted thee, unhappy man ?
The meanest serf in Roderick’s clan
Had not been bribed, by love or fear,
Unknown to him to guide thee here.” 400

XVII

“ Sweet Ellen, dear my life must be,
Since it is worthy care from thee ;
Yet life I hold but idle breath
When love or honor’s weighed with death.
Then let me profit by my chance, 405
And speak my purpose bold at once.
I come to bear thee from a wild
Where ne’er before such blossom smiled,
By this soft hand to lead thee far
From frantic scenes of feud and war. 410
Near Bochastle my horses wait ;
They bear us soon to Stirling gate.
I’ll place thee in a lovely bower,
I’ll guard thee like a tender flower — ”
“ O hush, Sir Knight ! ’twere female art, 415
To say I do not read thy heart ;

Too much, before, my selfish ear
Was idly soothed my praise to hear.
That fatal bait hath lured thee back,
In deathful hour, o'er dangerous track ; 420
And how, O how, can I atone
The wreck my vanity brought on ! —
One way remains — I'll tell him all —
Yes ! struggling bosom, forth it shall !
Thou, whose light folly bears the blame, 425
Buy thine own pardon with thy shame !
But first — my father is a man
Outlawed and exiled, under ban ;
The price of blood is on his head,
With me 'twere infamy to wed. 430
Still wouldst thou speak ? — then hear the truth !
Fitz-James, there is a noble youth —
If yet he is ! — exposed for me
And mine to dread extremity —
Thou hast the secret of my heart ; 435
Forgive, be generous, and depart ! ”

XVIII

Fitz-James knew every wily train
A lady's fickle heart to gain,
But here he knew and felt them vain.
There shot no glance from Ellen's eye, 440
To give her steadfast speech the lie ;
In maiden confidence she stood,
Though mantled in her cheek the blood,
And told her love with such a sigh
Of deep and hopeless agony, 445
As death had sealed her Malcolm's doom
And she sat sorrowing on his tomb.
Hope vanished from Fitz-James's eye,
But not with hope fled sympathy.

He proffered to attend her side,
As brother would a sister guide.
"O little know'st thou Roderick's heart!
Safer for both we go apart.
O haste thee, and from Allan learn,
If thou mayst trust yon wily kern."
With hand upon his forehead laid,
The conflict of his mind to shade,
A parting step or two he made;
Then, as some thought had crossed his brain,
He paused, and turned, and came again.

XIX

"Hear, lady, yet a parting word! —
It chanced in fight that my poor sword
Preserved the life of Scotland's lord.
This ring the grateful Monarch gave,
And bade, when I had boon to crave,
To bring it back, and boldly claim
The recompense that I would name.
Ellen, I am no courtly lord,
But one who lives by lance and sword,
Whose castle is his helm and shield,
His lordship the embattled field.
What from a prince can I demand,
Who neither reck of state nor land?
Ellen, thy hand — the ring is thine;
Each guard and usher knows the sign.
Seek thou the King without delay;
This signet shall secure thy way:
And claim thy suit, whate'er it be,
As ransom of his pledge to me."
He placed the golden circlet on,
Paused — kissed her hand — and then was gone.
The aged Minstrel stood aghast,
So hastily Fitz-James shot past.

He joined his guide, and wending down
The ridges of the mountain brown,
Across the stream they took their way
That joins Loch Katrine to Achray.

485

XX

All in the Trosachs' glen was still,
Noontide was sleeping on the hill:
Sudden his guide whooped loud and high —
"Murdoch! was that a signal cry?" —
He stammered forth, "I shout to scare
Yon raven from his dainty fare."
He looked — he knew the raven's prey,
His own brave steed: "Ah! gallant gray!
For thee — for me, perchance — 'twere well
We ne'er had seen the Trosachs' dell. —
Murdoch, move first — but silently;
Whistle or whoop, and thou shalt die!"
Jealous and sullen on they fared,
Each silent, each upon his guard.

490

495

500

XXI

Now wound the path its dizzy ledge
Around a precipice's edge,
When lo! a wasted female form,
Blighted by wrath of sun and storm,
In tattered weeds and wild array,
Stood on a cliff beside the way,
And glancing round her restless eye,
Upon the wood, the rock, the sky,
Seemed naught to mark, yet all to spy.
Her brow was wreathed with gaudy broom;
With gesture wild she waved a plume
Of feathers, which the eagles fling
To crag and cliff from dusky wing;

505

510



LOCH ACHRAY AND BEN VENUE

To face p. 94



Such spoils her desperate step had sought, 515
Where scarce was footing for the goat.
The tartan plaid she first descried,
And shrieked till all the rocks replied ;
As loud she laughed when near they drew,
For then the Lowland garb she knew ; 520
And then her hands she wildly wrung,
And then she wept, and then she sung —
She sung ! — the voice, in better time,
Perchance to harp or lute might chime ;
And now, though strained and roughened, still 525
Rung wildly sweet to dale and hill.

XXII

SONG

They bid me sleep, they bid me pray,
They say my brain is warped and wrung —
I cannot sleep on Highland brae,
I cannot pray in Highland tongue. 530
But were I now where Allan glides,
Or heard my native Devan's tides,
So sweetly would I rest, and pray
That Heaven would close my wintry day !

'Twas thus my hair they bade me braid, 535
They made me to the church repair ;
It was my bridal morn they said,
And my true love would meet me there.
But woe betide the cruel guile
That drowned in blood the morning smile ! 540
And woe betide the fairy dream !
I only waked to sob and scream.

XXIII

" Who is this maid ? what means her lay ?
She hovers o'er the hollow way,

And flutters wide her mantle gray, 545
As the lone heron spreads his wing,
By twilight, o'er a haunted spring."
" 'Tis Blanche of Devan," Murdoch said,
" A crazed and captive Lowland maid,
Ta'en on the morn she was a bride, 550
When Roderick forayed Devan-side.
The gay bridegroom resistance made,
And felt our Chief's unconquered blade.
I marvel she is now at large,
But oft she 'scapes from Maudlin's charge. — 555
Hence, brain-sick fool!" — He raised his bow: —
" Now, if thou strik'st her but one blow,
I'll pitch thee from the cliff as far
As ever peasant pitched a bar!"
" Thanks, champion, thanks!" the Maniac cried, 560
And pressed her to Fitz-James's side.
" See the gray pennons I prepare,
To seek my true love through the air!
I will not lend that savage groom,
To break his fall, one downy plume! 565
No! — deep amid disjointed stones,
The wolves shall batten on his bones,
And then shall his detested plaid,
By bush and brier in mid-air stayed,
Wave forth a banner fair and free, 570
Meet signal for their revelry."

XXIV

" Hush thee, poor maiden, and be still!"
" O! thou look'st kindly, and I will.
Mine eye has dried and wasted been,
But still it loves the Lincoln green; 575
And, though mine ear is all unstrung,
Still, still it loves the Lowland tongue.

“For O my sweet William was forester true,
He stole poor Blanche’s heart away !
His coat it was all of the greenwood hue, 580
And so blithely he trilled the Lowland lay !

“It was not that I meant to tell . . .
But thou art wise and guessest well.”
Then, in a low and broken tone,
And hurried note, the song went on. 585
Still on the Clansman fearfully
She fixed her apprehensive eye,
Then turned it on the Knight, and then
Her look glanced wildly o’er the glen.

XXV

“The toils are pitched, and the stakes are set,— 590
Ever sing merrily, merrily ;
The bows they bend, and the knives they whet,
Hunters live so cheerily.

“It was a stag, a stag of ten,
Bearing its branches sturdily ; 595
He came stately down the glen,—
Ever sing hardily, hardily.

“It was there he met with a wounded doe,
She was bleeding deathfully ;
She warned him of the toils below, 600
O, so faithfully, faithfully !

“He had an eye, and he could heed, —
Ever sing warily, warily ;
He had a foot, and he could speed, —
Hunters watch so narrowly.” 605

XXVI

Fitz-James's mind was passion-tossed,
When Ellen's hints and fears were lost ;
But Murdoch's shout suspicion wrought,
And Blanche's song conviction brought.
Not like a stag that spies the snare, 620
But lion of the hunt aware,
He waved at once his blade on high,
" Disclose thy treachery, or die ! "
Forth at full speed the Clansman flew,
But in his race his bow he drew. 625
The shaft just grazed Fitz-James's crest,
And thrilled in Blanche's faded breast. —
Murdoch of Alpine ! prove thy speed,
For ne'er had Alpine's son such need ;
With heart of fire, and foot of wind, 630
The fierce avenger is behind !
Fate judges of the rapid strife —
The forfeit death — the prize is life ;
Thy kindred ambush lies before,
Close couched upon the heathery moor ; 635
Them couldst thou reach ! — it may not be —
Thine ambushed kin thou ne'er shalt see,
The fiery Saxon gains on thee ! —
Resistless speeds the deadly thrust,
As lightning strikes the pine to dust ; 640
With foot and hand Fitz-James must strain
Ere he can win his blade again.
Bent o'er the fallen with falcon eye,
He grimly smiled to see him die,
Then slower wended back his way, 645
Where the poor maiden bleeding lay.

XXVII

She sat beneath the birchen tree,
Her elbow resting on her knee ;

She had withdrawn the fatal shaft,
And gazed on it, and feebly laughed; 640
Her wreath of broom and feathers gray,
Daggled with blood, beside her lay.
The Knight to stanch the life-stream tried, —
“Stranger, it is in vain!” she cried.
“This hour of death has given me more 645
Of reason’s power than years before;
For, as these ebbing veins decay,
My frenzied visions fade away.
A helpless injured wretch I die,
And something tells me in thine eye 650
That thou wert mine avenger born.
Seest thou this tress? — O, still I’ve worn
This little tress of yellow hair,
Through danger, frenzy, and despair!
It once was bright and clear as thine, 655
But blood and tears have dimmed its shine.
I will not tell thee when ’twas shred,
Nor from what guiltless victim’s head, —
My brain would turn! — but it shall wave
Like plumage on thy helmet brave, 660
Till sun and wind shall bleach the stain,
And thou wilt bring it me again.
I waver still. — O God! more bright
Let reason beam her parting light! —
O, by thy knighthood’s honored sign, 665
And for thy life preserved by mine,
When thou shalt see a darksome man,
Who boasts him Chief of Alpine’s Clan,
With tartans broad and shadowy plume,
And hand of blood, and brow of gloom, 670
Be thy heart bold, thy weapon strong,
And wreak poor Blanche of Devan’s wrong! —

They watch for thee by pass and fell . . .
 Avoid the path . . . O God ! . . . farewell."

XXVIII

A kindly heart had brave Fitz-James ;	675
Fast poured his eyes at pity's claims ;	
And now, with mingled grief and ire,	
He saw the murdered maid expire.	
" God, in my need, be my relief,	
As I wreak this on yonder Chief ! "	680
A lock from Blanche's tresses fair	
He blended with her bridegroom's hair ;	
The mingled braid in blood he dyed,	
And placed it on his bonnet-side :	
" By Him whose word is truth, I swear,	685
No other favor will I wear,	
Till this sad token I imbrue	
In the best blood of Roderick Dhù ! —	
But hark ! what means yon faint halloo ?	
The chase is up, — but they shall know,	690
The stag at bay's a dangerous foe."	
Barred from the known but guarded way,	
Through copse and cliffs Fitz-James must stray,	
And oft must change his desperate track,	
By stream and precipice turned back.	695
Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at length,	
From lack of food and loss of strength,	
He couched him in a thicket hoar,	
And thought his toils and perils o'er : —	
" Of all my rash adventures past,	700
This frantic feat must prove the last !	
Who e'er so mad but might have guessed	
That all this Highland hornet's nest	
Would muster up in swarms so soon	
As e'er they heard of bands at Doune ? —	705

Like bloodhounds now they search me out, —
Hark, to the whistle and the shout! —
If farther through the wilds I go,
I only fall upon the foe :
I'll couch me here till evening gray,
Then darkling try my dangerous way.”

710

XXIX

The shades of eve come slowly down,
The woods are wrapt in deeper brown,
The owl awakens from her dell,
The fox is heard upon the fell ;
Enough remains of glimmering light
To guide the wanderer's steps aright,
Yet not enough from far to show
His figure to the watchful foe.

715

With cautious step and ear awake,
He climbs the crag and threads the brake ;
And not the summer solstice there
Tempered the midnight mountain air,
But every breeze that swept the wold
Benumbed his drenchéd limbs with cold.

720

In dread, in danger, and alone,
Famished and chilled, through ways unknown,
Tangled and steep, he journeyed on ;
Till, as a rock's huge point he turned,
A watch-fire close before him burned.

725

730

XXX

Beside its embers red and clear,
Basked in his plaid a mountaineer ;
And up he sprung with sword in hand, —
“ Thy name and purpose ! Saxon, stand ! ”
“ A stranger.” “ What dost thou require ? ”
“ Rest and a guide, and food and fire.

735

My life's beset, my path is lost,
The gale has chilled my limbs with frost."
"Art thou a friend to Roderick?" "No."
"Thou dar'st not call thyself a foe?" 740
"I dare! to him and all the band
He brings to aid his murderous hand."
"Bold words! — but, though the beast of game
The privilege of chase may claim,
Though space and law the stag we lend, 745
Ere hound we slip or bow we bend,
Who ever recked, where, how, or when,
The prowling fox was trapped or slain?
Thus treacherous scouts, — yet sure they lie,
Who say thou cam'st a secret spy!" — 750
"They do, by heaven! — come Roderick Dhu,
And of his clan the boldest two,
And let me but till morning rest,
I write the falsehood on their crest."
"If by the blaze I mark aright, 755
Thou bear'st the belt and spur of Knight."
"Then by these tokens mayst thou know
Each proud oppressor's mortal foe."
"Enough, enough; sit down and share
A soldier's couch, a soldier's fare." 760

XXXX

He gave him of his Highland cheer,
The hardened flesh of mountain deer;
Dry fuel on the fire he laid,
And bade the Saxon share his plaid.
He tended him like welcome guest, 765
Then thus his further speech addressed: —
"Stranger, I am to Roderick Dhu
A clansman born, a kinsman true;
Each word against his honor spoke
Demands of me avenging stroke; 770

Yet more,—upon thy fate, 'tis said,
A mighty augury is laid.
It rests with me to wind my horn,—
Thou art with numbers overborne ;
It rests with me, here, brand to brand, 775
Worn as thou art, to bid thee stand :
But, not for clan, nor kindred's cause,
Will I depart from honor's laws ;
To assail a wearied man were shame,
And stranger is a holy name ; 780
Guidance and rest, and food and fire,
In vain he never must require.
Then rest thee here till dawn of day ;
Myself will guide thee on the way,
O'er stock and stone, through watch and ward, 785
Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard,
As far as Coilantogle's ford ;
From thence thy warrant is thy sword."
"I take thy courtesy, by heaven,
As freely as 'tis nobly given !" 790
"Well, rest thee ; for the bittern's cry
Sings us the lake's wild lullaby."
With that he shook the gathered heath,
And spread his plaid upon the wreath ;
And the brave foemen, side by side, 795
Lay peaceful down like brothers tried,
And slept until the dawning beam
Purpled the mountain and the stream.

He sought these wilds, traversed by few,
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu. 60

IV

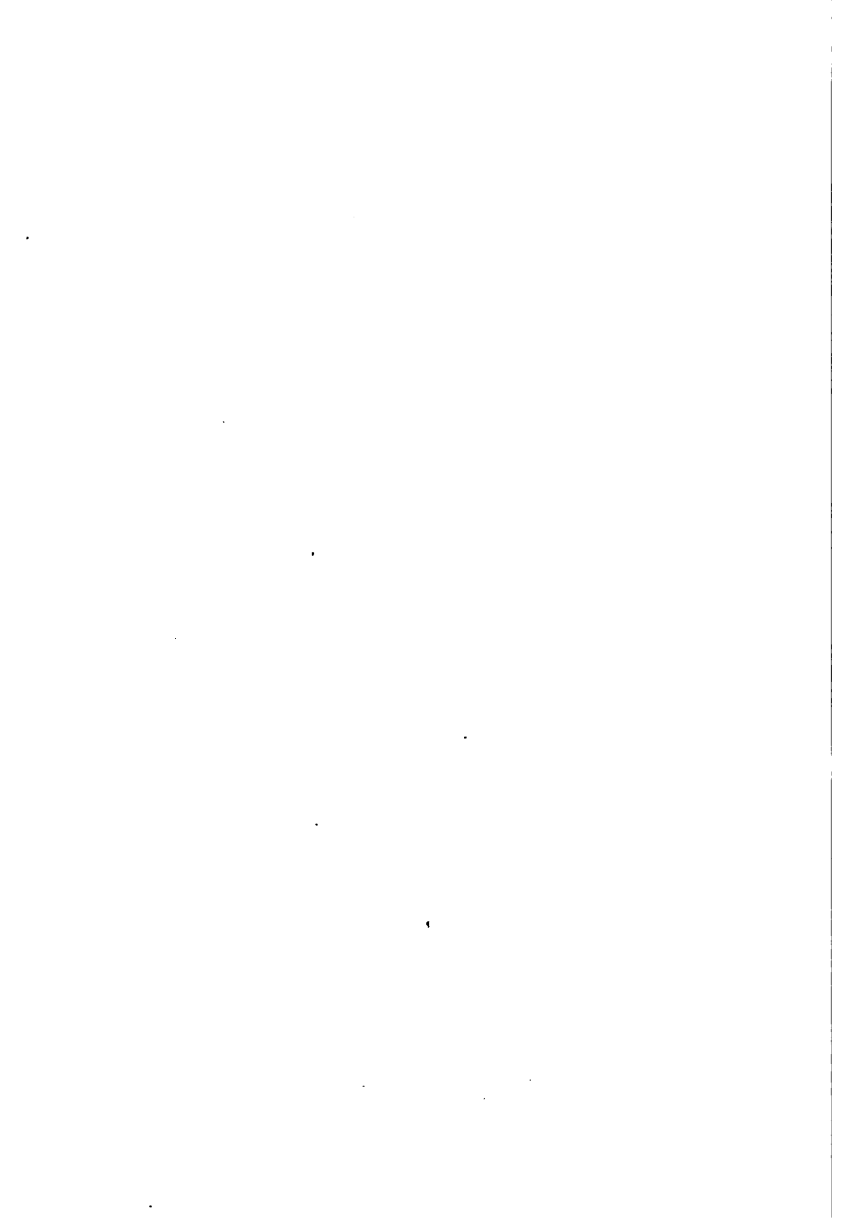
“ Brave Gael, my pass, in danger tried,
Hangs in my belt and by my side ;
Yet, sooth to tell,” the Saxon said,
“ I dreamt not now to claim its aid. 65
When here, but three days since, I came,
Bewildered in pursuit of game,
All seemed as peaceful and as still
As the mist slumbering on yon hill ;
Thy dangerous Chief was then afar, 70
Nor soon expected back from war.
Thus said, at least, my mountain-guide,
Though deep perchance the villain lied.”
“ Yet why a second venture try ? ”
“ A warrior thou, and ask me why ! — 75
Moves our free course by such fixed cause
As gives the poor mechanic laws ?
Enough, I sought to drive away
The lazy hours of peaceful day ;
Slight cause will then suffice to guide 80
A Knight’s free footsteps far and wide, —
A falcon flown, a greyhound strayed,
The merry glance of mountain maid ;
Or, if a path be dangerous known,
The danger’s self is lure alone.” 85

V

“ Thy secret keep, I urge thee not ; —
Yet, ere again ye sought this spot,
Say, heard ye naught of Lowland war,
Against Clan-Alpine, raised by Mar ? ”
“ No, by my word ; — of bands prepared 90
To guard King James’s sports I heard ;



LOCH VENNACHAR AND BENLEDI



Nor doubt I aught, but, when they hear
This muster of the mountaineer,
Their pennons will abroad be flung,
Which else in Doune had peaceful hung." 95
"Free be they flung! for we were loath
Their silken folds should feast the moth.
Free be they flung! — as free shall wave
Clan-Alpine's pine in banner brave.
But, stranger, peaceful since you came, 100
Bewildered in the mountain-game,
Whence the bold boast by which you show
Vich-Alpine's vowed and mortal foe?"
"Warrior, but yester-morn I knew
Naught of thy Chieftain, Roderick Dhu, 105
Save as an outlawed desperate man,
The chief of a rebellious clan,
Who, in the Regent's court and sight,
With ruffian dagger stabbed a knight;
Yet this alone might from his part 110
Sever each true and loyal heart."

VI

Wrathful at such arraignment foul,
Dark lowered the clansman's sable scowl.
A space he paused, then sternly said,
"And heardst thou why he drew his blade? 115
Heardst thou that shameful word and blow
Brought Roderick's vengeance on his foe?
What recked the Chieftain if he stood
On Highland heath or Holy-Rood?
He rights such wrong where it is given, 120
If it were in the court of heaven."
"Still was it outrage; — yet, 'tis true,
Not then claimed sovereignty his due;
While Albany with feeble hand
Held borrowed truncheon of command, 125

The young King, mewed in Stirling tower,
Was stranger to respect and power.
But then, thy Chieftain's robber life! —
Winning mean prey by causeless strife,
Wrenching from ruined Lowland swain
His herds and harvest reared in vain, —
Methinks a soul like thine should scorn
The spoils from such foul foray borne."

130

VII

The Gael beheld him grim the while,
And answered with disdainful smile :
" Saxon, from yonder mountain high,
I marked thee send delighted eye
Far to the south and east, where lay,
Extended in succession gay,
Deep waving fields and pastures green,
With gentle slopes and groves between : —
These fertile plains, that softened vale,
Were once the birthright of the Gael ;
The stranger came with iron hand,
And from our fathers reft the land.
Where dwell we now ? See, rudely swell
Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell.
Ask we this savage hill we tread
For fattened steer or household bread,
Ask we for flocks these shingles dry,
And well the mountain might reply, —
' To you, as to your sires of yore,
Belong the target and claymore !
I give you shelter in my breast,
Your own good blades must win the rest.'
Pent in this fortress of the North,
Think'st thou we will not sally forth,
To spoil the spoiler as we may,
And from the robber rend the prey ?

135

140

145

150

155

Ay, by my soul ! — While on yon plain 160
The Saxon rears one shock of grain,
While of ten thousand herds there strays
But one along yon river's maze,—
The Gael, of plain and river heir,
Shall with strong hand redeem his share. 165
Where live the mountain Chiefs who hold
That plundering Lowland field and fold
Is aught but retribution true ?
Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick Dhu."

VIII

Answered Fitz-James : " And, if I sought, 170
Think'st thou no other could be brought ?
What deem ye of my path waylaid ?
My life given o'er to ambuscade ? "
" As of a meed to rashness due :
Hadst thou sent warning fair and true, — 175
I seek my hound or falcon strayed,
I seek, good faith, a Highland maid, —
Free hadst thou been to come and go ;
But secret path marks secret foe.
Nor yet for this, even as a spy, 180
Hadst thou, unheard, been doomed to die,
Save to fulfil an augury."
" Well, let it pass ; nor will I now
Fresh cause of enmity avow,
To chafe thy mood and cloud thy brow. 185
Enough, I am by promise tied
To match me with this man of pride :
Twice have I sought Clan-Alpine's glen
In peace ; but when I come again,
I come with banner, brand, and bow, 190
As leader seeks his mortal foe.
For love-lorn swain in lady's bower
Ne'er panted for the appointed hour,

As I, until before me stand
This rebel Chieftain and his band ! ”

195

IX

“ Have then thy wish ! ” — He whistled shrill,
And he was answered from the hill;
Wild as the scream of the curlew,
From crag to crag the signal flew.
Instant, through copse and heath, arose 200
Bonnets and spears and bended bows ;
On right, on left, above, below,
Sprung up at once the lurking foe ;
From shingles gray their lances start,
The bracken bush sends forth the dart, 205
The rushes and the willow-wand
Are bristling into axe and brand,
And every tuft of broom gives life
To plaided warrior armed for strife.
That whistle garrisoned the glen 210
At once with full five hundred men,
As if the yawning hill to heaven
A subterranean host had given.
Watching their leader’s beck and will,
All silent there they stood and still. 215
Like the loose crags whose threatening mass
Lay tottering o’er the hollow pass,
As if an infant’s touch could urge
Their headlong passage down the verge,
With step and weapon forward flung, 220
Upon the mountain-side they hung.
The Mountaineer cast glance of pride
Along Benledi’s living side,
Then fixed his eye and sable brow
Full on Fitz-James : “ How say’st thou now ? 225
These are Clan Alpine’s warriors true ;
And, Saxon, — I am Roderick Dhu ! ”

X

Fitz-James was brave : — though to his heart
The life-blood thrilled with sudden start,
He manned himself with dauntless air, 230
Returned the Chief his haughty stare,
His back against a rock he bore,
And firmly placed his foot before : —
“ Come one, come all ! this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I.” 235
Sir Roderick marked, — and in his eyes
Respect was mingled with surprise,
And the stern joy which warriors feel
In foeman worthy of their steel.
Short space he stood — then waved his hand : 240
Down sunk the disappearing band ;
Each warrior vanished where he stood,
In broom or bracken, heath or wood ;
Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,
In osiers pale and copses low ; 245
It seemed as if their mother Earth
Had swallowed up her warlike birth.
The wind’s last breath had tossed in air
Pennon and plaid and plumage fair, —
The next but swept a lone hillside, 250
Where heath and fern were waving wide :
The sun’s last glance was glinted back
From spear and glaive, from targe and jack, —
The next, all unreflected, shone
On bracken green and cold gray stone. 255

XI

Fitz-James looked round, — yet scarce believed
The witness that his sight received ;
Such apparition well might seem
Delusion of a dreadful dream.

Sir Roderick in suspense he eyed, 260
And to his look the Chief replied :
“ Fear naught — nay, that I need not say —
But — doubt not aught from mine array.
Thou art my guest ; — I pledged my word
As far as Coilantogle ford : 265
Nor would I call a clansman’s brand
For aid against one valiant hand,
Though on our strife lay every vale
Rent by the Saxon from the Gael.
So move we on ; — I only meant 270
To show the reed on which you leant,
Deeming this path you might pursue
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.”
They moved ; — I said Fitz-James was brave
As ever knight that belted glaive, 275
Yet dare not say that now his blood
Kept on its wont and tempered flood,
As, following Roderick’s stride, he drew
That seeming lonesome pathway through,
Which yet by fearful proof was rife 280
With lances, that, to take his life,
Waited but signal from a guide,
So late dishonored and defied.
Ever, by stealth, his eye sought round
The vanished guardians of the ground, 285
And still from copse and heather deep
Fancy saw spear and broadsword peep,
And in the plover’s shrilly strain
The signal whistle heard again.
Nor breathed he free till far behind 290
The pass was left ; for then they wind
Along a wide and level green,
Where neither tree nor tuft was seen,

Nor rush nor bush of broom was near,
To hide a bonnet or a spear.

295

XII

The Chief in silence strode before,
And reached that torrent's sounding shore,
Which, daughter of three mighty lakes,
From Vennachar in silver breaks,
Sweeps through the plain, and ceaseless mines 300
On Bochastle the mouldering lines,
Where Rome, the Empress of the world,
Of yore her eagle wings unfurled.
And here his course the Chieftain stayed,
Threw down his target and his plaid, 305
And to the Lowland warrior said :
" Bold Saxon ! to his promise just,
Vich-Alpine has discharged his trust.
This murderous Chief, this ruthless man,
This head of a rebellious clan, 310
Hath led thee safe, through watch and ward,
Far past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard.
Now, man to man, and steel to steel,
A Chieftain's vengeance thou shalt feel.
See, here all vantageless I stand, 315
Armed like thyself with single brand ;
For this is Coilantogle ford,
And thou must keep thee with thy sword."

XIII

The Saxon paused : " I ne'er delayed,
When foeman bade me draw my blade ; 320
Nay more, brave Chief, I vowed thy death ;
Yet sure thy fair and generous faith,
And my deep debt for life preserved,
A better meed have well deserved :

Can naught but blood our feud atone? 325
Are there no means? " — " No, stranger, none!
And hear, — to fire thy flagging zeal, —
The Saxon cause rests on thy steel;
For thus spoke Fate by prophet bred
Between the living and the dead: 330
' Who spills the foremost foeman's life,
His party conquers in the strife.'"
" Then, by my word," the Saxon said,
" The riddle is already read.
Seek yonder brake beneath the cliff, — 335
There lies Red Murdoch, stark and stiff.
Thus Fate hath solved her prophecy;
Then yield to Fate, and not to me.
To James at Stirling let us go,
When, if thou wilt be still his foe, 340
Or if the King shall not agree
To grant thee grace and favor free,
I plight mine honor, oath, and word
That, to thy native strengths restored,
With each advantage shalt thou stand 345
That aids thee now to guard thy land."

XIV

Dark lightning flashed from Roderick's eye:
" Soars thy presumption, then, so high,
Because a wretched kern ye slew,
Homage to name to Roderick Dhu? 350
He yields not, he, to man nor Fate!
Thou add'st but fuel to my hate; —
My clansman's blood demands revenge.
Not yet prepared? — By heaven, I change
My thought, and hold thy valor light 355
As that of some vain carpet knight,
Who ill deserved my courteous care,
And whose best boast is but to wear

A braid of his fair lady's hair."
"I thank thee, Roderick, for the word ! 360
It nerves my heart, it steels my sword ;
For I have sworn this braid to stain
In the best blood that warms thy vein.
Now, truce, farewell ! and, ruth, begone ! —
Yet think not that by thee alone, 365
Proud Chief ! can courtesy be shown ;
Though not from copse, or heath, or cairn,
Start at my whistle clansmen stern,
Of this small horn one feeble blast
Would fearful odds against thee cast. 370
But fear not — doubt not — which thou wilt —
We try this quarrel hilt to hilt."
Then each at once his falchion drew,
Each on the ground his scabbard threw,
Each looked to sun and stream and plain 375
As what they ne'er might see again ;
Then foot and point and eye opposed,
In dubious strife they darkly closed.

xv

Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
That on the field his targe he threw, 380
Whose brazen studs and tough bull-hide
Had death so often dashed aside ;
For, trained abroad his arms to wield,
Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.
He practised every pass and ward, 385
To thrust, to strike, to feint, to guard ;
While less expert, though stronger far,
The Gael maintained unequal war.
Three times in closing strife they stood,
And thrice the Saxon blade drank blood ; 390
No stinted draught, no scanty tide,
The gushing flood the tartans dyed.

Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain,
And showered his blows like wintry rain ;
And, as firm rock or castle-roof
Against the winter shower is proof, 395
The foe, invulnerable still,
Foiled his wild rage by steady skill ;
Till, at advantage ta'en, his brand
Forced Roderick's weapon from his hand, 400
And backward borne upon the lea,
Brought the proud Chieftain to his knee.

XVI

"Now yield thee, or by Him who made
The world, thy heart's blood dyes my blade !"
"Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy ! 405
Let recreant yield, who fears to die."
Like adder darting from his coil,
Like wolf that dashes through the toil,
Like mountain-cat who guards her young,
Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung ; 410
Received, but recked not of a wound,
And locked his arms his foeman round.—
Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own !
No maiden's hand is round thee thrown !
That desperate grasp thy frame might feel 415
Through bars of brass and triple steel !
They tug, they strain ! down, down they go,
The Gael above, Fitz-James below.
The Chieftain's gripe his throat compressed,
His knee was planted on his breast ; 420
His clotted locks he backward threw,
Across his brow his hand he drew,
From blood and mist to clear his sight,
Then gleamed aloft his dagger bright !
But hate and fury ill supplied 425
The stream of life's exhausted tide,

And all too late the advantage came,
To turn the odds of deadly game ;
For, while the dagger gleamed on high,
Reeled soul and sense, reeled brain and eye. 430
Down came the blow ! but in the heath
The erring blade found bloodless sheath.
The struggling foe may now unclasp
The fainting Chief's relaxing grasp ;
Unwounded from the dreadful close, 435
But breathless all, Fitz-James arose.

XVII

He faltered thanks to Heaven for life,
Redeemed, unhopèd, from desperate strife ;
Next on his foe his look he cast,
Whose every gasp appeared his last ; 440
In Roderick's gore he dipped the braid, —
“ Poor Blanche ! thy wrongs are dearly paid ;
Yet with thy foe must die, or live,
The praise that faith and valor give.”
With that he blew a bugle note, 445
Undid the collar from his throat,
Unbonneted, and by the wave
Sat down his brow and hands to lave.
Then faint afar are heard the feet
Of rushing steeds in gallop fleet ; 450
The sounds increase, and now are seen
Four mounted squires in Lincoln green ;
Two who bear lance, and two who lead
By loosened rein a saddled steed ;
Each onward held his headlong course, 455
And by Fitz-James reined up his horse, —
With wonder viewed the bloody spot, —
“ Exclaim not, gallants ! question not. —
You, Herbert and Luffness, alight,
And bind the wounds of yonder knight ; 460

Let the gray palfrey bear his weight,
We destined for a fairer freight,
And bring him on to Stirling straight ;
I will before at better speed,
To seek fresh horse and fitting weed. 465
The sun rides high ; — I must be bounè
To see the archer-game at noon ;
But lightly Bayard clears the lea. —
De Vaux and Herries, follow me.

XVIII

“Stand, Bayard, stand !” — the steed obeyed, 470
With arching neck and bended head,
And glancing eye and quivering ear,
As if he loved his lord to hear.
No foot Fitz-James in stirrup stayed,
No grasp upon the saddle laid, 475
But wreathed his left hand in the mane,
And lightly bounded from the plain,
Turned on the horse his arméd heel,
And stirred his courage with the steel,
Bounded the fiery steed in air, 480
The rider sat erect and fair,
Then like a bolt from steel crossbow
Forth launched, along the plain they go.
They dashed that rapid torrent through,
And up Carhonie’s hill they flew ; 485
Still at the gallop pricked the Knight,
His merry men followed as they might.
Along thy banks, swift Teith ! they ride,
And in the race they mock thy tide ;
Torry and Lendrick now are past, 490
And Deanstown lies behind them cast ;
They rise, the bannered towers of Doune,
They sink in distant woodland soon ;



To face p. 119

STIRLING CASTLE
From an old print

Blair-Drummond sees the hoofs strike fire,
They sweep like breeze through Ochertyre ; 495
They mark just glance and disappear
The lofty brow of ancient Kier ;
They bathe their coursers' sweltering sides,
Dark Forth ! amid thy sluggish tides,
And on the opposing shore take ground, 500
With splash, with scramble, and with bound.
Right-hand they leave thy cliffs, Craig-Forth !
And soon the bulwark of the North,
Gray Stirling, with her towers and town,
Upon their fleet career looked down. 505

XIX

As up the flinty path they strained,
Sudden his steed the leader reined ;
A signal to his squire he flung,
Who instant to his stirrup sprung : —
" Seest thou, De Vaux, yon woodsman gray, 510
Who townward holds the rocky way,
Of stature tall and poor array ?
Mark'st thou the firm, yet active stride,
With which he scales the mountain-side ?
Know'st thou from whence he comes, or whom ? " 515
" No, by my word ; — a burly groom
He seems, who in the field or chase
A baron's train would nobly grace — "
" Out, out, De Vaux ! can fear supply,
And jealousy, no sharper eye ? 520
Afar, ere to the hill he drew,
That stately form and step I knew ;
Like form in Scotland is not seen,
Treads not such step on Scottish green.
'Tis James of Douglas, by Saint Serle ! 525
The uncle of the banished Earl.

Away, away, to court, to show
The near approach of dreaded foe :
The King must stand upon his guard ;
Douglas and he must meet prepared." 530
Then right-hand wheeled their steeds, and straight
They won the Castle's postern gate.

XX

The Douglas, who had bent his way
From Cambus-kenneth's abbey gray,
Now, as he climbed the rocky shelf, 535
Held sad communion with himself : —
" Yes ! all is true my fears could frame ;
A prisoner lies the noble Græme,
And fiery Roderick soon will feel
The vengeance of the royal steel. 540
I, only I, can ward their fate, —
God grant the ransom come not late !
The Abbess hath her promise given,
My child shall be the bride of Heaven ; —
Be pardoned one repining tear ! 545
For He who gave her knows how dear,
How excellent ! — but that is by,
And now my business is — to die. —
Ye towers ! within whose circuit dread
A Douglas by his sovereign bled ; 550
And thou, O sad and fatal mound !
That oft hast heard the death-axe sound,
As on the noblest of the land
Fell the stern headsman's bloody hand, —
The dungeon, block, and nameless tomb 555
Prepare — for Douglas seeks his doom !
But hark ! what blithe and jolly peal
Makes the Franciscan steeple reel ?
And see ! upon the crowded street,
In motley groups what masquers meet ! 560

Banner and pageant, pipe and drum,
And merry morrice-dancers come.
I guess, by all this quaint array,
The burghers hold their sports to-day.
James will be there ; he loves such show, 565
Where the good yeoman bends his bow,
And the tough wrestler foils his foe,
As well as where, in proud career,
The high-born tilter shivers spear.
I'll follow to the Castle-park, 570
And play my prize ; — King James shall mark
If age has tamed these sinews stark,
Whose force so oft in happier days
His boyish wonder loved to praise."

XXI

The Castle gates were open flung, 575
The quivering drawbridge rocked and rung,
And echoed loud the flinty street
Beneath the coursers' clattering feet,
As slowly down the steep descent
Fair Scotland's King and nobles went, 580
While all along the crowded way
Was jubilee and loud huzza.
And ever James was bending low
To his white jennet's saddle-bow,
Doffing his cap to city dame, 585
Who smiled and blushed for pride and shame.
And well the simperer might be vain, —
He chose the fairest of the train.
Gravely he greets each city sire,
Commends each pageant's quaint attire, 590
Gives to the dancers thanks aloud,
And smiles and nods upon the crowd,
Who rend the heavens with their acclaims, —
"Long live the Commons' King, King James!"

Behind the King thronged peer and knight, 595
And noble dame and damsel bright,
Whose fiery steeds ill brooked the stay
Of the steep street and crowded way.
But in the train you might discern
Dark lowering brow and visage stern ; 600
There nobles mourned their pride restrained,
And the mean burgher's joys disdained ;
And chiefs, who, hostage for their clan,
Were each from home a banished man,
There thought upon their own gray tower, 605
Their waving woods, their feudal power,
And deemed themselves a shameful part
Of pageant which they cursed in heart.

XXII

Now, in the Castle-park, drew out
Their checkered bands the joyous rout. 610
There morricers, with bell at heel
And blade in hand, their mazes wheel ;
But chief, beside the butts, there stand
Bold Robin Hood and all his band, —
Friar Tuck with quarterstaff and cowl, 615
Old Scathelocke with his surly scowl,
Maid Marian, fair as ivory bone,
Scarlet, and Mutch, and Little John ;
Their bugles challenge all that will,
In archery to prove their skill. 620
The Douglas bent a bow of might, —
His first shaft centred in the white,
And when in turn he shot again,
His second split the first in twain.
From the King's hand must Douglas take 625
A silver dart, the archers' stake ;
Fondly he watched, with watery eye,
Some answering glance of sympathy, —

No kind emotion made reply !
Indifferent as to archer wight, 630
The monarch gave the arrow bright.

XXIII

Now, clear the ring ! for, hand to hand,
The manly wrestlers take their stand.
Two o'er the rest superior rose,
And proud demanded mightier foes, — 635
Nor called in vain, for Douglas came. —
For life is Hugh of Larbert lame ;
Scarce better John of Alloa's fare,
Whom senseless home his comrades bare.
Prize of the wrestling match, the King 640
To Douglas gave a golden ring,
While coldly glanced his eye of blue,
As frozen drop of wintry dew.
Douglas would speak, but in his breast
His struggling soul his words suppressed ; 645
Indignant then he turned him where
Their arms the brawny yeomen bare,
To hurl the massive bar in air.
When each his utmost strength had shown,
The Douglas rent an earth-fast stone 650
From its deep bed, then heaved it high,
And sent the fragment through the sky
A rood beyond the farthest mark ;
And still in Stirling's royal park,
The gray-haired sires, who know the past, 655
To strangers point the Douglas cast,
And moralize on the decay
Of Scottish strength in modern day.

XXIV

The vale with loud applauses rang,
The Ladies' Rock sent back the clang. 660

The King, with look unmoved, bestowed
A purse well filled with pieces broad.
Indignant smiled the Douglas proud,
And threw the gold among the crowd,
Who now with anxious wonder scan, 665
And sharper glance, the dark gray man ;
Till whispers rose among the throng,
That heart so free, and hand so strong,
Must to the Douglas blood belong.
The old men marked and shook the head, 670
To see his hair with silver spread,
And winked aside, and told each son
Of feats upon the English done,
Ere Douglas of the stalwart hand
Was exiled from his native land. 675
The women praised his stately form,
Though wrecked by many a winter's storm ;
The youth with awe and wonder saw
His strength surpassing Nature's law.
Thus judged, as is their wont, the crowd, 680
Till murmurs rose to clamors loud.
But not a glance from that proud ring
Of peers who circled round the King
With Douglas held communion kind,
Or called the banished man to mind ; 685
No, not from those who at the chase
Once held his side the honored place,
Begirt his board, and in the field
Found safety underneath his shield ;
For he whom royal eyes disown, 690
When was his form to courtiers known !

XXV

The Monarch saw the gambols flag,
And bade let loose a gallant stag,

Whose pride, the holiday to crown,
Two favorite greyhounds should pull down, 695
That venison free and Bourdeaux wine
Might serve the archery to dine.
But Lufra, — whom from Douglas' side
Nor bribe nor threat could e'er divide,
The fleetest hound in all the North, — 700
Brave Lufra saw, and darted forth.
She left the royal hounds midway,
And dashing on the antlered prey,
Sunk her sharp muzzle in his flank,
And deep the flowing life-blood drank. 705
The King's stout huntsman saw the sport
By strange intruder broken short,
Came up, and with his leash unbound
In anger struck the noble hound.
The Douglas had endured, that morn, 710
The King's cold look, the nobles' scorn,
And last, and worst to spirit proud,
Had borne the pity of the crowd ;
But Lufra had been fondly bred,
To share his board, to watch his bed, 715
And oft would Ellen Lufra's neck
In maiden glee with garlands deck ;
They were such playmates that with name
Of Lufra Ellen's image came.
His stifled wrath is brimming high, 720
In darkened brow and flashing eye ;
As waves before the bark divide,
The crowd gave way before his stride ;
Needs but a buffet and no more,
The groom lies senseless in his gore. 725
Such blow no other hand could deal,
Though gauntleted in glove of steel.

XXVI

Then clamored loud the royal train,
And brandished swords and staves amain,
But stern the Baron's warning: "Back! 730
Back, on your lives, ye menial pack!
Beware the Douglas. — Yes! behold,
King James! The Douglas, doomed of old,
And vainly sought for near and far,
A victim to atone the war, 735
A willing victim, now attends,
Nor craves thy grace but for his friends." —
"Thus is my clemency repaid?
Presumptuous Lord!" the Monarch said:
"Of thy misproud ambitious clan, 740
Thou, James of Bothwell, wert the man,
The only man, in whom a foe
My woman-mercy would not know;
But shall a Monarch's presence brook
Injurious blow and haughty look? — 745
What ho! the Captain of our Guard!
Give the offender fitting ward. —
Break off the sports!" — for tumult rose,
And yeomen 'gan to bend their bows, —
"Break off the sports!" he said and frowned, 750
"And bid our horsemen clear the ground."

XXVII

Then uproar wild and misarray
Marred the fair form of festal day.
The horsemen pricked among the crowd
Repelled by threats and insult loud; 755
To earth are borne the old and weak,
The timorous fly, the women shriek;
With flint, with shaft, with staff, with bar,
The hardier urge tumultuous war.

At once round Douglas darkly sweep 760
The royal spears in circle deep,
And slowly scale the pathway steep,
While on the rear in thunder pour
The rabble with disordered roar.
With grief the noble Douglas saw 765
The Commons rise against the law,
And to the leading soldier said :
“ Sir John of Hyndford, ’twas my blade
That knighthood on thy shoulder laid ;
For that good deed permit me then 770
A word with these misguided men. —

XXVIII

“ Hear, gentle friends, ere yet for me
Ye break the bands of fealty.
My life, my honor, and my cause,
I tender free to Scotland’s laws. 775
Are these so weak as must require
The aid of your misguided ire ?
Or if I suffer causeless wrong,
Is then my selfish rage so strong,
My sense of public weal so low, 780
That, for mean vengeance on a foe,
Those cords of love I should unbind
Which knit my country and my kind ?
O no ! Believe, in yonder tower
It will not soothe my captive hour, 785
To know those spears our foes should dread
For me in kindred gore are red :
To know, in fruitless brawl begun,
For me that mother wails her son,
For me that widow’s mate expires, 790
For me that orphans weep their sires,
That patriots mourn insulted laws,
And curse the Douglas for the cause.

O let your patience ward such ill,
And keep your right to love me still ! ”

795

XXIX

The crowd's wild fury sunk again
In tears, as tempests melt in rain.
With lifted hands and eyes, they prayed
For blessings on his generous head
Who for his country felt alone,
And prized her blood beyond his own.
Old men upon the verge of life
Blessed him who stayed the civil strife ;
And mothers held their babes on high,
The self-devoted Chief to spy,
Triumphant over wrongs and ire,
To whom the prattlers owed a sire.
Even the rough soldier's heart was moved ;
As if behind some bier beloved,
With trailing arms and drooping head,
The Douglas up the hill he led,
And at the Castle's battled verge,
With sighs resigned his honored charge.

800

805

810

XXX

The offended Monarch rode apart,
With bitter thought and swelling heart,
And would not now vouchsafe again
Through Stirling streets to lead his train.
“ O Lennox, who would wish to rule
This changeling crowd, this common fool ?
Hear'st thou,” he said, “ the loud acclaim
With which they shout the Douglas name ?
With like acclaim the vulgar throat
Strained for King James their morning note ;
With like acclaim they hailed the day
When first I broke the Douglas sway ;

815

820

825

And like acclaim would Douglas greet
If he could hurl me from my seat.
Who o'er the herd would wish to reign,
Fantastic, fickle, fierce, and vain ?
Vain as the leaf upon the stream, 830
And fickle as a changeful dream ;
Fantastic as a woman's mood,
And fierce as Frenzy's fevered blood.
Thou many-headed monster-thing,
O who would wish to be thy king ? — 835

XXXI

“ But soft ! what messenger of speed
Spurs hitherward his panting steed ?
I guess his cognizance afar —
What from our cousin, John of Mar ? ”
“ He prays, my liege, your sports keep bound 840
Within the safe and guarded ground ;
For some foul purpose yet unknown, —
Most sure for evil to the throne, —
The outlawed Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
Has summoned his rebellious crew ; 845
'Tis said, in James of Bothwell's aid
These loose banditti stand arrayed.
The Earl of Mar this morn from Doune
To break their muster marched, and soon
Your Grace will hear of battle fought ; 850
But earnestly the Earl besought,
Till for such danger he provide,
With scanty train you will not ride.”

XXXII

“ Thou warn'st me I have done amiss, —
I should have earlier looked to this ; 855
I lost it in this bustling day. —
Retrace with speed thy former way ;

Spare not for spoiling of thy steed,
 The best of mine shall be thy meed.
 Say to our faithful Lord of Mar, 860
 We do forbid the intended war ;
 Roderick this morn in single fight
 Was made our prisoner by a knight,
 And Douglas hath himself and cause
 Submitted to our kingdom's laws. 865
 The tidings of their leaders lost
 Will soon dissolve the mountain host,
 Nor would we that the vulgar feel,
 For their Chief's crimes, avenging steel.
 Bear Mar our message, Braco, fly ! " 870
 He turned his steed, — " My liege, I hie,
 Yet ere I cross this lily lawn
 I fear the broadswords will be drawn."
 The turf the flying courser spurned,
 And to his towers the King returned. 875

XXXIII

Ill with King James's mood that day
 Suited gay feast and minstrel lay ;
 Soon were dismissed the courtly throng,
 And soon cut short the festal song.
 Nor less upon the saddened town 880
 The evening sunk in sorrow down.
 The burghers spoke of civil jar,
 Of rumored feuds and mountain war,
 Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick Dhu,
 All up in arms ; — the Douglas too, 885
 They mourned him pent within the hold,
 " Where stout Earl William was of old." —
 And there his word the speaker stayed,
 And finger on his lip he laid,
 Or pointed to his dagger blade. 890

But jaded horsemen from the west
At evening to the Castle pressed,
And busy talkers said they bore
Tidings of fight on Katrine's shore ;
At noon the deadly fray begun,
And lasted till the set of sun.
Thus giddy rumor shook the town,
Till closed the Night her pennons brown.

CANTO SIXTH

THE GUARD-ROOM

I

THE sun, awakening, through the smoky air
Of the dark city casts a sullen glance,
Rousing each caitiff to his task of care,
Of sinful man the sad inheritance;
Summoning revellers from the lagging dance, 5
Scaring the prowling robber to his den;
Gilding on battled tower the warder's lance,
And warning student pale to leave his pen,
And yield his drowsy eyes to the kind nurse of men.
What various scenes, and O, what scenes of woe, 10
Are witnessed by that red and struggling beam!
The fevered patient, from his pallet low,
Through crowded hospital beholds it stream;
The ruined maiden trembles at its gleam,
The debtor wakes to thought of gyve and jail, 15
The love-lorn wretch starts from tormenting dream;
The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale,
Trims her sick infant's couch, and soothes his feeble
wail.

II

At dawn the towers of Stirling rang
With soldier-step and weapon-clang, 20
While drums with rolling note foretell
Relief to weary sentinel.
Through narrow loop and casement barred,
The sunbeams sought the Court of Guard,

And, struggling with the smoky air, 25
Deadened the torches' yellow glare.
In comfortless alliance shone
The lights through arch of blackened stone,
And showed wild shapes in garb of war,
Faces deformed with beard and scar, 30
All haggard from the midnight watch,
And fevered with the stern debauch ;
For the oak table's massive board,
Flooded with wine, with fragments stored,
And beakers drained, and cups o'erthrown, 35
Showed in what sport the night had flown.
Some, weary, snored on floor and bench ;
Some labored still their thirst to quench ;
Some, chilled with watching, spread their hands
O'er the huge chimney's dying brands, 40
While round them, or beside them flung,
At every step their harness rung.

III

These drew not for their fields the sword,
Like tenants of a feudal lord,
Nor owned the patriarchal claim 45
Of Chieftain in their leader's name ;
Adventurers they, from far who roved,
To live by battle which they loved.
There the Italian's clouded face,
The swarthy Spaniard's there you trace ; 50
The mountain-loving Switzer there
More freely breathed in mountain-air ;
The Fleming there despised the soil
That paid so ill the laborer's toil ;
Their rolls showed French and German name ; 55
And merry England's exiles came,
To share, with ill-concealed disdain,
Of Scotland's pay the scanty gain.

All brave in arms, well trained to wield
The heavy halberd, brand, and shield ; 60
In camps licentious, wild, and bold ;
In pillage fierce and uncontrolled ;
And now, by holytide and feast,
From rules of discipline released.

IV

They held debate of bloody fray, 65
Fought 'twixt Loch Katrine and Achray.
Fierce was their speech, and mid their words
Their hands oft grappled to their swords ;
Nor sunk their tone to spare the ear
Of wounded comrades groaning near, 70
Whose mangled limbs and bodies gored
Bore token of the mountain sword,
Though, neighboring to the Court of Guard,
Their prayers and feverish wails were heard, —
Sad burden to the ruffian joke, 75
And savage oath by fury spoke ! —
At length upstarted John of Brent,
A yeoman from the banks of Trent ;
A stranger to respect or fear,
In peace a chaser of the deer, 80
In host a hardy mutineer,
But still the boldest of the crew
When deed of danger was to do.
He grieved that day their games cut short,
And marred the dicer's brawling sport, 85
And shouted loud, "Renew the bowl !
And, while a merry catch I troll,
Let each the buxom chorus bear,
Like brethren of the brand and spear."

VI

The warder's challenge, heard without,
Stayed in mid-roar the merry shout.

A soldier to the portal went, — 110
“ Here is old Bertram, sirs, of Ghent ;
And — beat for jubilee the drum ! —
A maid and minstrel with him come.”
Bertram, a Fleming, gray and scarred,
Was entering now the Court of Guard, 115
A harper with him, and, in plaid
All muffled close, a mountain maid,
Who backward shrunk to 'scape the view
Of the loose scene and boisterous crew.
“ What news ? ” they roared : — “ I only know, 120
From noon till eve we fought with foe,
As wild and as untamable
As the rude mountains where they dwell ;
On both sides store of blood is lost,
Nor much success can either boast.” — 125
“ But whence thy captives, friend ? such spoil
As theirs must needs reward thy toil.
Old dost thou wax, and wars grow sharp ;
Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp !
Get thee an ape, and trudge the land, 130
The leader of a juggler band.”

VII

“ No, comrade ; — no such fortune mine.
After the fight these sought our line,
That aged harper and the girl,
And having audience of the Earl, 135
Mar bade I should purvey them steed,
And bring them hitherward with speed.
Forbear your mirth and rude alarm,
For none shall do them shame or harm.” —
“ Hear ye his boast ? ” cried John of Brent, 140
Ever to strife and jangling bent ;
“ Shall he strike doe beside our lodge,
And yet the jealous niggard grudge

To pay the forester his fee?
I'll have my share howe'er it be, 145
Despise of Moray, Mar, or thee."
Bertram his forward step withstood;
And, burning in his vengeful mood,
Old Allan, though unfit for strife,
Laid hand upon his dagger-knife; 150
But Ellen boldly stepped between,
And dropped at once the tartan screen: —
So, from his morning cloud, appears
The sun of May through summer tears.
The savage soldiery, amazed, 155
As on descended angel gazed;
Even hardy Brent, abashed and tamed,
Stood half admiring, half ashamed.

VIII

Boldly she spoke: "Soldiers, attend!
My father was the soldier's friend, 160
Cheered him in camps, in marches led,
And with him in the battle bled.
Not from the valiant or the strong
Should exile's daughter suffer wrong."
Answered De Brent, most forward still 165
In every feat, or good or ill:
"I shame me of the part I played;
And thou an outlaw's child, poor maid!
An outlaw I by forest laws,
And merry Needwood knows the cause. 170
Poor Rose, — if Rose be living now," —
He wiped his iron eye and brow, —
"Must bear such age, I think, as thou. —
Hear ye, my mates! I go to call
The Captain of our watch to hall: 175
There lies my halberd on the floor;
And he that steps my halberd o'er,

To do the maid injurious part,
My shaft shall quiver in his heart !
Beware loose speech, or jesting rough ; 180
Ye all know John de Brent. Enough."

IX

Their Captain came, a gallant young, —
Of Tullibardine's house he sprung, —
Nor wore he yet the spurs of knight ;
Gay was his mien, his humor light, 185
And, though by courtesy controlled,
Forward his speech, his bearing bold.
The high-born maiden ill could brook
The scanning of his curious look
And dauntless eye : — and yet, in sooth, 190
Young Lewis was a generous youth ;
But Ellen's lovely face and mien,
Ill suited to the garb and scene,
Might lightly bear construction strange,
And give loose fancy scope to range. 195
" Welcome to Stirling towers, fair maid !
Come ye to seek a champion's aid,
On palfrey white, with harper hoar,
Like errant damosel of yore ?
Does thy high quest a knight require, 200
Or may the venture suit a squire ? "
Her dark eye flashed ; — she paused and sighed : —
" O what have I to do with pride ! —
Through scenes of sorrow, shame, and strife,
A suppliant for a father's life, 205
I crave an audience of the King.
Behold, to back my suit, a ring,
The royal pledge of grateful claims,
Given by the Monarch to Fitz-James."

X

The signet ring young Lewis took 210
With deep respect and altered look,
And said : " This ring our duties own ;
And pardon, if to worth unknown,
In semblance mean obscurely veiled,
Lady, in aught my folly failed. 215
Soon as the day flings wide his gates,
The King shall know what suitor waits.
Please you meanwhile in fitting bower
Repose you till his waking hour ;
Female attendance shall obey 220
Your hest, for service or array.
Permit I marshal you the way."
But, ere she followed, with the grace
And open bounty of her race,
She bade her slender purse be shared 225
Among the soldiers of the guard.
The rest with thanks their guerdon took,
But Brent, with shy and awkward look,
On the reluctant maiden's hold
Forced bluntly back the proffered gold : — 230
" Forgive a haughty English heart,
And O, forget its ruder part !
The vacant purse shall be my share,
Which in my barret-cap I'll bear,
Perchance, in jeopardy of war, 235
Where gayer crests may keep afar."
With thanks — 'twas all she could — the maid
His rugged courtesy repaid.

XI

When Ellen forth with Lewis went,
Allan made suit to John of Brent : — 240
" My lady safe, O let your grace
Give me to see my master's face !

His minstrel I, — to share his doom
Bound from the cradle to the tomb.
Tenth in descent, since first my sires 245
Waked for his noble house their lyres,
Nor one of all the race was known
But prized its weal above their own.
With the Chief's birth begins our care;
Our harp must soothe the infant heir, 250
Teach the youth tales of fight, and grace
His earliest feat of field or chase;
In peace, in war, our rank we keep,
We cheer his board, we soothe his sleep,
Nor leave him till we pour our verse — 255
A doleful tribute! — o'er his hearse.
Then let me share his captive lot;
It is my right — deny it not!"
"Little we reck," said John of Brent,
"We Southern men, of long descent; 260
Nor wot we how a name — a word —
Makes clansmen vassals to a lord:
Yet kind my noble landlord's part, —
God bless the house of Beaudesert!
And, but I loved to drive the deer 265
More than to guide the laboring steer,
I had not dwelt an outcast here.
Come, good old Minstrel, follow me;
Thy Lord and Chieftain shalt thou see."

XII

Then, from a rusted iron hook, 270
A bunch of ponderous keys he took,
Lighted a torch, and Allan led
Through grated arch and passage dread.
Portals they passed, where, deep within,
Spoke prisoner's moan and fetters' din; 275

Through rugged vaults, where, loosely stored,
Lay wheel, and axe, and headsman's sword,
And many a hideous engine grim,
For wrenching joint and crushing limb,
By artists formed who deemed it shame 280
And sin to give their work a name.
They halted at a low-browed porch,
And Brent to Allan gave the torch,
While bolt and chain he backward rolled,
And made the bar unhasp its hold. 285
They entered: — 'twas a prison-room
Of stern security and gloom,
Yet not a dungeon; for the day
Through lofty gratings found its way,
And rude and antique garniture 290
Decked the sad walls and oaken floor,
Such as the rugged days of old
Deemed fit for captive noble's hold.
"Here," said De Brent, "thou mayst remain
Till the Leech visit him again. 295
Strict is his charge, the warders tell,
To tend the noble prisoner well."
Retiring then the bolt he drew,
And the lock's murmurs growled anew.
Roused at the sound, from lowly bed 300
A captive feebly raised his head;
The wondering Minstrel looked, and knew —
Not his dear lord, but Roderick Dhu!
For, come from where Clan-Alpine fought,
They, erring, deemed the Chief he sought. 305

XIII

As the tall ship, whose lofty prore
Shall never stem the billows more,
Deserted by her gallant band,
Amid the breakers lies astrand, —

So on his couch lay Roderick Dhu ! 310
And oft his fevered limbs he threw
In toss abrupt, as when her sides
Lie rocking in the advancing tides,
That shake her frame with ceaseless beat,
Yet cannot heave her from her seat ; — 315
O, how unlike her course at sea !
Or his free step on hill and lea ! —
Soon as the Minstrel he could scan, —
“ What of thy lady ? — of my clan ? —
My mother ? — Douglas ? — tell me all ! 320
Have they been ruined in my fall ?
Ah, yes ! or wherefore art thou here ?
Yet speak, — speak boldly, — do not fear.” —
For Allan, who his mood well knew,
Was choked with grief and terror too. — 325
“ Who fought ? — who fled ? — Old man, be
brief ; —
Some might, — for they had lost their Chief.
Who basely live — who bravely died ? ”
“ O, calm thee, Chief ! ” the Minstrel cried,
“ Ellen is safe ! ” “ For that thank Heaven ! ” 330
“ And hopes are for the Douglas given ; —
The Lady Margaret, too, is well ;
And, for thy clan, — on field or fell,
Has never harp of minstrel told
Of combat fought so true and bold. 335
Thy stately Pine is yet unbent,
Though many a goodly bough is rent.”

XIV

The Chieftain reared his form on high,
And fever's fire was in his eye ;
But ghastly, pale, and livid streaks 340
Checkered his swarthy brow and cheeks.

“Hark, Minstrel ! I have heard thee play,
 With measure bold on festal day,
 In yon lone isle, — again where ne’er
 Shall harper play or warrior hear ! — 345
 That stirring air that peals on high,
 O’er Dermid’s race our victory. —
 Strike it ! — and then, — for well thou canst, —
 Free from thy minstrel-spirit glanced,
 Fling me the picture of the fight, 350
 When met my clan the Saxon might.
 I’ll listen, till my fancy hears
 The clang of swords, the crash of spears !
 These gates, these walls, shall vanish then
 For the fair field of fighting men, 355
 And my free spirit burst away,
 As if it soared from battle fray.”
 The trembling Bard with awe obeyed, —
 Slow on the harp his hand he laid ;
 But soon remembrance of the sight 360
 He witnessed from the mountain’s height,
 With what old Bertram told at night,
 Awakened the full power of song,
 And bore him in career along ; —
 As shallop launched on river’s tide, 365
 That slow and fearful leaves the side,
 But, when it feels the middle stream,
 Drives downward swift as lightning’s beam.

XV

BATTLE OF BEAL’ AN DUINE

“The Minstrel came once more to view
 The eastern ridge of Benvenue, 370
 For ere he parted he would say
 Farewell to lovely Loch Achray —

Where shall he find, in foreign land,
So lone a lake, so sweet a strand ! —
There is no breeze upon the fern, 375
No ripple on the lake,
Upon her eery nods the erne,
The deer has sought the brake ;
The small birds will not sing aloud,
The springing trout lies still, 380
So darkly glooms yon thunder-cloud,
That swathes, as with a purple shroud,
Benledi's distant hill.
Is it the thunder's solemn sound
That mutters deep and dread, 385
Or echoes from the groaning ground
The warrior's measured tread ?
Is it the lightning's quivering glance
That on the thicket streams,
Or do they flash on spear and lance 390
The sun's retiring beams ? —
I see the dagger-crest of Mar,
I see the Moray silver star,
Wave o'er the cloud of Saxon war,
That up the lake comes winding far ! 395
To hero bounè for battle-strife,
Or bard of martial lay,
'Twere worth ten years of peaceful life,
One glance at their array !

XVI

" Their light-armed archers far and near 400
Surveyed the tangled ground,
Their centre ranks, with pike and spear,
A twilight forest frowned,
Their barbed horsemen in the rear
The stern battalia crowned. 405

No cymbal clashed, no clarion rang,
Still were the pipe and drum ;
Save heavy tread, and armor's clang,
The sullen march was dumb.
There breathed no wind their crests to shake, 420
Or wave their flags abroad ;
Scarce the frail aspen seemed to quake,
That shadowed o'er their road.
Their vaward scouts no tidings bring,
Can rouse no lurking foe, 425
Nor spy a trace of living thing,
Save when they stirred the roe ;
The host moves like a deep-sea wave,
Where rise no rocks its pride to brave,
High-swelling, dark, and slow. 430
The lake is passed, and now they gain
A narrow and a broken plain,
Before the Trosachs' rugged jaws ;
And here the horse and spearmen pause,
While, to explore the dangerous glen, 435
Dive through the pass the archer-men.

XVII

“ At once there rose so wild a yell
Within that dark and narrow dell,
As all the fiends from heaven that fell
Had pealed the banner-cry of hell ! 440
Forth from the pass in tumult driven,
Like chaff before the wind of heaven,
The archery appear :
For life ! for life ! their flight they ply —
And shriek, and shout, and battle-cry, 445
And plaids and bonnets waving high,
And broadswords flashing to the sky,
Are maddening in the rear.

Onward they drive in dreadful race,
Pursuers and pursued ; 440
Before that tide of flight and chase,
How shall it keep its rooted place,
The spearmen's twilight wood ? —
' Down, down,' cried Mar, ' your lances down !
Bear back both friend and foe ! ' — 445
Like reeds before the tempest's frown,
That serried grove of lances brown
At once lay levelled low ;
And closely shouldering side to side,
The bristling ranks the onset bide. — 450
' We'll quell the savage mountaineer,
As their Tinchel cows the game !
They come as fleet as forest deer,
We'll drive them back as tame.'

XVIII

" Bearing before them in their course 455
The relics of the archer force,
Like wave with crest of sparkling foam,
Right onward did Clan-Alpine come.
Above the tide, each broadsword bright
Was brandishing like beam of light, 460
Each targe was dark below ;
And with the ocean's mighty swing,
When heaving to the tempest's wing,
They hurled them on the foe.
I heard the lance's shivering crash, 465
As when the whirlwind rends the ash ;
I heard the broadsword's deadly clang,
As if a hundred anvils rang !
But Moray wheeled his rearward rank
Of horsemen on Clan-Alpine's flank, — 470
' My banner-man, advance !
I see,' he cried, ' their column shake.

Now, gallants ! for your ladies' sake,
Upon them with the lance ! ' —
The horsemen dashed among the rout, 475
As deer break through the broom ;
Their steeds are stout, their swords are out,
They soon make lightsome room.
Clan-Alpine's best are backward borne —
Where, where was Roderick then ! 480
One blast upon his bugle-horn
Were worth a thousand men.
And reflux through the pass of fear
The battle's tide was poured ;
Vanished the Saxon's struggling spear, 485
Vanished the mountain-sword.
As Bracklinn's chasm, so black and steep,
Receives her roaring linn,
As the dark caverns of the deep
Suck the wild whirlpool in, 490
So did the deep and darksome pass
Devour the battle's mingled mass ;
None linger now upon the plain,
Save those who ne'er shall fight again.

XIX

" Now westward rolls the battle's din, 495
That deep and doubling pass within. —
Minstrel, away ! the work of fate
Is bearing on ; its issue wait,
Where the rude Trosachs' dread defile
Opens on Katrine's lake and isle. 500
Gray Benvenue I soon repassed,
Loch Katrine lay beneath me cast.
The sun is set ; — the clouds are met,
The lowering scowl of heaven
An inky hue of livid blue 505
To the deep lake has given ;

Strange gusts of wind from mountain glen
Swept o'er the lake, then sunk again.
I heeded not the eddying surge,
Mine eye but saw the Trosachs' gorge, 510
Mine ear but heard that sullen sound,
Which like an earthquake shook the ground,
And spoke the stern and desperate strife
That parts not but with parting life,
Seeming, to minstrel ear, to toll 515
The dirge of many a passing soul.
Nearer it comes — the dim-wood glen
The martial flood disgorged again,
But not in mingled tide ;
The plaided warriors of the North 520
High on the mountain thunder forth
And overhang its side,
While by the lake below appears
The darkening cloud of Saxon spears.
At weary bay each shattered band, 525
Eying their foemen, sternly stand ;
Their banners stream like tattered sail,
That flings its fragments to the gale,
And broken arms and disarray
Marked the fell havoc of the day. 530

XX

“ Viewing the mountain's ridge askance,
The Saxons stood in sullen trance,
Till Moray pointed with his lance,
And cried : ‘ Behold yon isle ! —
See ! none are left to guard its strand 535
But women weak, that wring the hand :
'Tis there of yore the robber band
Their booty wont to pile ; —
My purse, with bonnet-pieces store,

To him will swim a bow-shot o'er, 540
And loose a shallop from the shore.
Lightly we'll tame the war-wolf then,
Lords of his mate, and brood, and den.'
Forth from the ranks a spearman sprung,
On earth his casque and corselet rung, 545
 He plunged him in the wave : —
All saw the deed, — the purpose knew,
And to their clamors Benvenue
 A mingled echo gave ;
The Saxons shout, their mate to cheer, 550
The helpless females scream for fear,
And yells for rage the mountaineer.
'Twas then, as by the outcry riven,
Poured down at once the lowering heaven :
A whirlwind swept Loch Katrine's breast, 555
Her billows reared their snowy crest.
Well for the swimmer swelled they high,
To mar the Highland marksman's eye ;
For round him showered, mid rain and hail,
The vengeful arrows of the Gael. 560
In vain. — He nears the isle — and lo !
His hand is on a shallop's bow.
Just then a flash of lightning came,
It tinged the waves and strand with flame ;
I marked Duncraggan's widowed dame, 565
Behind an oak I saw her stand,
A naked dirk gleamed in her hand : —
It darkened, — but amid the moan
Of waves I heard a dying groan ; —
Another flash ! — the spearman floats 570
A weltering corse beside the boats,
And the stern matron o'er him stood,
Her hand and dagger streaming blood,

XXI

“ ‘ Revenge ! revenge ! ’ the Saxons cried,
The Gaels’ exulting shout replied. 575
Despite the elemental rage,
Again they hurried to engage ;
But, ere they closed in desperate fight,
Bloody with spurring came a knight,
Sprung from his horse, and from a crag 580
Waved ’twixt the hosts a milk-white flag.
Clarion and trumpet by his side
Rung forth a truce-note high and wide,
While, in the Monarch’s name, afar
A herald’s voice forbade the war, 585
For Bothwell’s lord and Roderick bold
Were both, he said, in captive hold.” —
But here the lay made sudden stand,
The harp escaped the Minstrel’s hand !
Oft had he stolen a glance, to spy 590
How Roderick brooked his minstrelsy :
At first, the Chieftain, to the chime,
With lifted hand kept feeble time ;
That motion ceased, — yet feeling strong
Varied his look as changed the song ; 595
At length, no more his deafened ear
The minstrel melody can hear ;
His face grows sharp, — his hands are clenched,
As if some pang his heart-strings wrenched ;
Set are his teeth, his fading eye 600
Is sternly fixed on vacancy ;
Thus, motionless and moanless, drew
His parting breath stout Roderic Dhu ! —
Old Allan-bane looked on aghast,
While grim and still his spirit passed ; 605
But when he saw that life was fled,
He poured his wailing o’er the dead.

XXII

LAMENT

“ And art thou cold and lowly laid,
Thy foeman’s dread, thy people’s aid,
Breadalbane’s boast, Clan-Alpine’s shade ! 610
For thee, shall none a requiem say ? —
For thee who loved the minstrel’s lay,
For thee, of Bothwell’s house the stay,
The shelter of her exiled line,
E’en in this prison-house of thine, 615
I’ll wail for Alpine’s honored Pine !

“ What groans shall yonder valleys fill !
What shrieks of grief shall rend yon hill !
What tears of burning rage shall thrill,
When mourns thy tribe thy battles done, 620
Thy fall before the race was won,
Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun !
There breathes not clansman of thy line,
But would have given his life for thine,
O, woe for Alpine’s honored Pine ! 625

“ Sad was thy lot on mortal stage ! —
The captive thrush may brook the cage,
The prisoned eagle dies for rage.
Brave spirit, do not scorn my strain !
And, when its notes awake again, 630
Even she, so long beloved in vain,
Shall with my harp her voice combine,
And mix her woe and tears with mine,
To wail Clan-Alpine’s honored Pine.”

XXIII

Ellen the while, with bursting heart, 635
Remained in lordly bower apart,

Where played, with many-colored gleams,
Through storied pane the rising beams.
In vain on gilded roof they fall,
And lightened up a tapestried wall, 640
And for her use a menial train
A rich collation spread in vain.
The banquet proud, the chamber gay,
Scarce drew one curious glance astray ;
Or if she looked, 'twas but to say, 645
With better omen dawned the day
In that lone isle, where waved on high
The dun-deer's hide for canopy ;
Where oft her noble father shared
The simple meal her care prepared, 650
While Lufra, crouching by her side,
Her station claimed with jealous pride,
And Douglas, bent on woodland game,
Spoke of the chase to Malcolm Græme,
Whose answer, oft at random made, 655
The wandering of his thoughts betrayed.
Those who such simple joys have known
Are taught to prize them when they're gone.
But sudden, see, she lifts her head,
The window seeks with cautious tread. 660
What distant music has the power
To win her in this woful hour ?
'Twas from a turret that o'erhung
Her latticed bower, the strain was sung

XXIV

LAY OF THE IMPRISONED HUNTSMAN

" My hawk is tired of perch and hood, 665
My idle greyhound loathes his food,
My horse is weary of his stall,
And I am sick of captive thrall.

I wish I were as I have been,
Hunting the hart in forest green, 670
With bended bow and bloodhound free,
For that's the life is meet for me.

"I hate to learn the ebb of time
From yon dull steeple's drowsy chime,
Or mark it as the sunbeams crawl, 675
Inch after inch, along the wall.
The lark was wont my matins ring,
The sable rook my vespers sing;
These towers, although a king's they be,
Have not a hall of joy for me. 680

"No more at dawning morn I rise,
And sun myself in Ellen's eyes,
Drive the fleet deer the forest through,
And homeward wend with evening dew;
A blithesome welcome blithely meet, 685
And lay my trophies at her feet,
While fled the eve on wing of glee,—
That life is lost to love and me!"

XXV

The heart-sick lay was hardly said,
The listener had not turned her head, 690
It trickled still, the starting tear,
When light a footstep struck her ear,
And Snowdoun's graceful Knight was near.
She turned the hastier, lest again
The prisoner should renew his strain. 695
"O welcome, brave Fitz-James!" she said;
"How may an almost orphan maid
Pay the deep debt—" "O say not so!
To me no gratitude you owe.

Not mine, alas! the boon to give,
And bid thy noble father live;
I can but be thy guide, sweet maid,
With Scotland's King thy suit to aid.
No tyrant he, though ire and pride
May lay his better mood aside.
Come, Ellen, come! 'tis more than time,
He holds his court at morning prime."
With beating heart, and bosom wrung,
As to a brother's arm she clung.
Gently he dried the falling tear,
And gently whispered hope and cheer;
Her faltering steps half led, half stayed,
Through gallery fair and high arcade,
Till at his touch its wings of pride
A portal arch unfolded wide.

XXVI

Within 'twas brilliant all and light,
A thronging scene of figures bright;
It glowed on Ellen's dazzled sight,
As when the setting sun has given
Ten thousand hues to summer even,
And from their tissue fancy frames
Aerial knights and fairy dames.
Still by Fitz-James her footing staid,
A few faint steps she forward made,
Then slow her drooping head she raised,
And fearful round the presence gazed;
For him she sought who owned this state,
The dreaded Prince whose will was fate! —
She gazed on many a princely port
Might well have ruled a royal court;
On many a splendid garb she gazed, —
Then turned bewildered and amazed,

For all stood bare; and in the room
Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume.
To him each lady's look was lent, 735
On him each courtier's eye was bent;
Midst furs and silks and jewels sheen,
He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
The centre of the glittering ring, —
And Snowdown's Knight is Scotland's King! 740

XXVII

As wreath of snow on mountain-breast
Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
And at the Monarch's feet she lay;
No word her choking voice commands, — 745
She showed the ring, — she clasped her hands.
O, not a moment could he brook,
The generous Prince, that suppliant look!
Gently he raised her, — and, the while,
Checked with a glance the circle's smile; 750
Graceful, but grave, her brow he kissed,
And bade her terrors be dismissed: —
“Yes, fair; the wandering poor Fitz-James
The fealty of Scotland claims.
To him thy woes, thy wishes, bring; 755
He will redeem his signet ring.
Ask naught for Douglas; — yester even,
His Prince and he have much forgiven;
Wrong hath he had from slanderous tongue,
I, from his rebel kinsmen, wrong. 760
We would not, to the vulgar crowd,
Yield what they craved with clamor loud;
Calmly we heard and judged his cause,
Our council aided and our laws.
I stanch'd thy father's death-feud stern 765
With stout De Vaux and gray Glencairn;

And Bothwell's Lord henceforth we own
The friend and bulwark of our throne. —
But, lovely infidel, how now ?
What clouds thy misbelieving brow ?
Lord James of Douglas, lend thine aid ;
Thou must confirm this doubting maid."

770

XXVIII

Then forth the noble Douglas sprung,
And on his neck his daughter hung.
The Monarch drank, that happy hour,
The sweetest, holiest draught of Power, —
When it can say with godlike voice,
Arise, sad Virtue, and rejoice !
Yet would not James the general eye
On nature's raptures long should pry ;
He stepped between — " Nay, Douglas, nay,
Steal not my proselyte away !
The riddle 'tis my right to read,
That brought this happy chance to speed.
Yes, Ellen, when disguised I stray
In life's more low but happier way,
'Tis under name which veils my power,
Nor falsely veils, — for Stirling's tower
Of yore the name of Snowdoun claims,
And Normans call me James Fitz-James.
Thus watch I o'er insulted laws,
Thus learn to right the injured cause."
Then, in a tone apart and low, —
" Ah, little traitress ! none must know
What idle dream, what lighter thought,
What vanity full dearly bought,
Joined to thine eye's dark witchcraft, drew
My spell bound steps to Benvenue
In dangerous hour, and all but gave
Thy Monarch's life to mountain glaive ! "

775

780

785

790

795

800

Aloud he spoke : "Thou still dost hold
That little talisman of gold,
Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's ring, —
What seeks fair Ellen of the King?"

XXIX

Full well the conscious maiden guessed 805
He probed the weakness of her breast ;
But with that consciousness there came
A lightening of her fears for Græme,
And more she deemed the Monarch's ire
Kindled 'gainst him who for her sire 810
Rebellious broadsword boldly drew ;
And, to her generous feeling true,
She craved the grace of Roderick Dhu.
"Forbear thy suit ; — the King of kings
Alone can stay life's parting wings. 815
I know his heart, I know his hand,
Have shared his cheer, and proved his brand ; —
My fairest earldom would I give
To bid Clan-Alpine's Chieftain live ! —
Hast thou no other boon to crave ? 820
No other captive friend to save ?"
Blushing, she turned her from the King,
And to the Douglas gave the ring,
As if she wished her sire to speak
The suit that stained her glowing cheek. 825
"Nay, then, my pledge has lost its force,
And stubborn justice holds her course.
Malcolm, come forth !" — and, at the word,
Down kneeled the Græme to Scotland's Lord.
"For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues, 830
From thee may Vengeance claim her dues,
Who, nurtured underneath our smile,
Hast paid our care by treacherous wile,

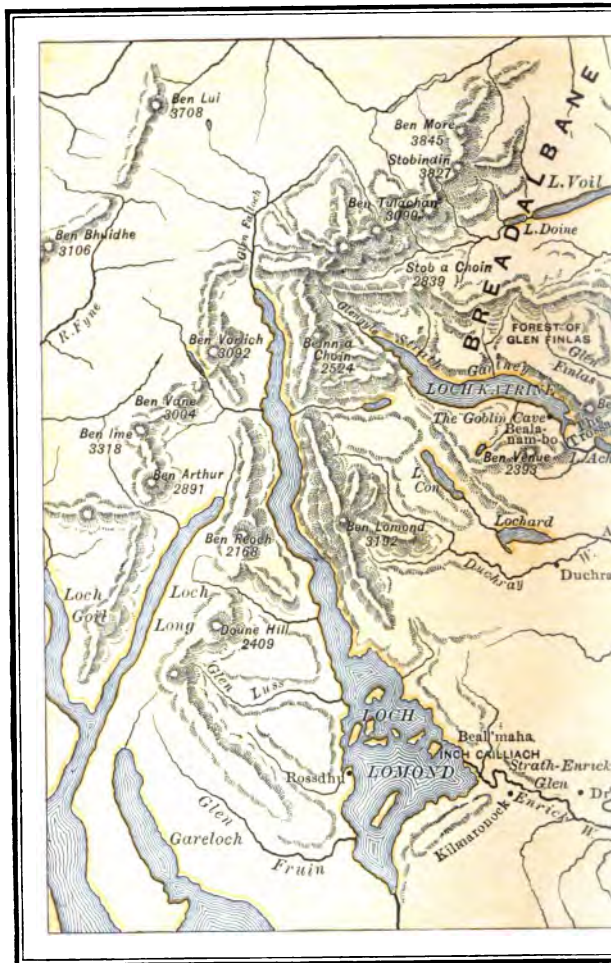
And sought amid thy faithful clan
A refuge for an outlawed man, 835
Dishonoring thus thy loyal name. —
Fetters and warder for the Græme! ”
His chain of gold the King unstrung,
The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,
Then gently drew the glittering band, 840
And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand.

HARP of the North, farewell! The hills grow dark,
On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;
In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark,
The deer, half seen, are to the covert wending. 845
Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain lending,
And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;
Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers blending,
With distant echo from the fold and lea,
And herdboys' evening pipe, and hum of housing bee.

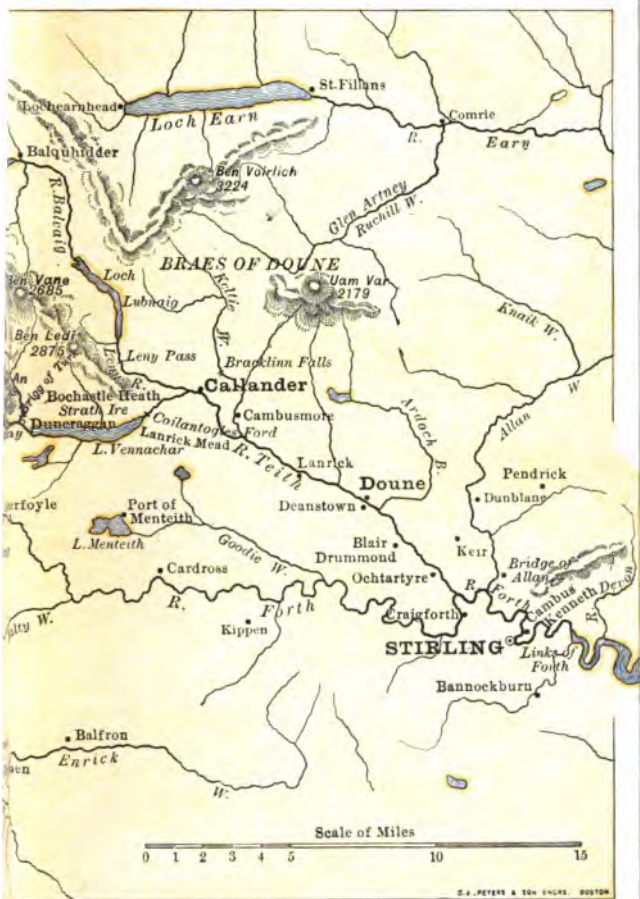
Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel Harp! 851
Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,
And little reck I of the censure sharp
May idly cavil at an idle lay.
Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way, 855
Through secret woes the world has never known,
When on the weary night dawned wearier day,
And bitterer was the grief devoured alone. —
That I o'erlive such woes, Enchantress! is thine own.

Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow retire, 860
Some Spirit of the Air has waked thy string!
'Tis now a seraph bold, with touch of fire,
'Tis now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.
Receding now, the dying numbers ring

Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell ; 865
And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring
A wandering witch-note of the distant spell —
And now, 'tis silent all ! — Enchantress, fare thee well .



MAP OF THE SCENE OF



“THE LADY OF THE LAKE”

NOTES

CANTO I

1. **Harp of the North.** Spirit of Scottish Minstrelsy.
2. **Witch-elm.** So called because its twigs were used as divining-rods.
- Saint Fillan.** A Scotch abbot : eighth century.
10. **Caledon.** Shortened from *Caledonia* : the Roman name for Scotland.
14. **According pause.** When the minstrel paused in his chant or recitative, the harp accompaniment was heard "sublime and high."
29. **Monan's rill.** St. Monan : a fourth century Scotch martyr.
- 31, 33. **Glenartney, Benvoirlich.** See map, south of Loch Earn.
45. **Beamed frontlet** = antlered forehead.
47. **Tainted,** with the odor of hunter and hounds.
53. **Uam-Var.** Ua-var, as the name is pronounced, or more properly *Uaighmor*, is a mountain to the northeast of the village of Callender in Menteith, deriving its name, which signifies the great den or cavern, from a sort of retreat among the rocks on the south side, said, by tradition, to have been the abode of a giant. In latter times it was the refuge of robbers and banditti, who have been only extirpated within these forty or fifty years. — SCOTT.
54. **Opening** (their mouths) : barking at sight of the game.
67. **Rout** : the crowd of hunters and hounds.
71. **Linn** = commonly *pool*, but sometimes, cataract. See canto vi, line 488.
84. **Shrewdly** = severely.
89. A collective name for the watershed of the river Teith. See map.
- 93-98. The places mentioned in these lines are all near Loch Katrine.
103. **Cambusmore** is near Callander on the Teith. Going west from here, the other places in this stanza are easily located.
120. **Saint Hubert**, according to legend, was a mighty hunter : the abbots of his order kept up a breed of hounds named in honor of their patron.
127. **Quarry** = the animal hunted.
138. **Whinyard.** A short sword or large knife.
145. **Trossachs** = (Bustling Country), a general name for the country around Loch Katrine. This is the most beautiful part of Scotland.
166. **Woe worth** = woe be to. *Worth* is from the old English verb *Weorðan* = to be, to become, and *chase* is really in the dative case.
197. **Shinar.** See the account of the Tower of Babel, Genesis xi, 1-9.
202. **Pagod.** The common form is *pagoda*.
208. **Sheen** = shining. Very common in this sense in the Middle English writers. See canto v, line 10.

223. Aspen. Sometimes called the shivering poplar; its light leaves quake in the slightest breeze. See canto v, lines 829-832.

This stanza (xii) is a capital example of description by enumeration, based upon close observation but not illuminated by any high imaginative power. The details selected are correct and suggestive in themselves, but the epithets are commonplace. Stanzas xi and xiv show much more inspiration.

263. Loch Katrine. See note on line 145 of this canto. The dimensions of this lake are about eight miles by two.

285. Cloister, here = monastery: the part for the whole.

297. Bead. This word originally meant *prayer*: then, one of numerous little balls strung on a rosary and dropped to keep tally of prayers.

354-361. A charming passage, where the imagery is perfectly adapted to the subject which it is intended to embellish.

363. Snood: a band or ribbon worn by Scotch maidens, but not by married women. These wore the coif. **Plaid** (pronounced *played*): an outer garment of bright woolen cloth, some ten yards long, draped, belted, and extending to the knee. Each clan had colors and a pattern of its own.

404. Prune = arrange.

425. The petty need he showed = his need of food and rest. The object of *showed* is *which*, to be supplied.

438. A couch (of heather). See lines 666-667 of this Canto.

443. Rood (= rod) = the cross.

460. The visioned future. The second-sight is a singular faculty of seeing an otherwise invisible object without any previous means used by the person that used it for that end: the vision makes such a lively impression upon the seers, that they neither see nor think of anything else, except the vision, as long as it continues; and then they appear pensive or jovial, according to the object that was represented to them. — SCOTT.

464. Lincoln green. So called from the town in which it was made. Compare "bayonet," from Bayonne, and "damask," from Damascus.

476. Sooth = truthful.

492. The rocky isle. This is now known as Ellen's Isle.

504. Retreat. The Celtic chieftains, whose lives were continually exposed to peril, had usually, in the most retired spot of their domains, some place of retreat for the hour of necessity, which, as circumstances would admit, was a tower, a cavern, or a rustic hut, in a strong and secluded situation. One of these last gave refuge to the unfortunate Charles Edward, in his perilous wanderings after the battle of Culloden. — SCOTT. In Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, chapter xxiii, is a vivid description of Cluny's Cage on Ben Alder, the retreat of the exiled Macpherson, chief of the clan Vourich.

525. Idaean vine. The whortleberry?

565-567. This foreshadows the entrance of a new character, the owner of the sword, and suggests that he is known to Fitz-James.

566. Brook = endure.

573. Ferragus or Ascabart. These two sons of Anak flourished in romantic fable. The first is well known to the admirers of Ariosto by the name of Ferrau. . . . Ascapart or Ascabart makes a very material figure in the History of Bevis of Hampton, by whom he was conquered. His effigies may be seen standing one side of the gate at Southampton, while the other is occupied by Bevis himself. — SCOTT.

585. Unasked his birth and name. The Highlanders, who carried hospitality to a punctilious excess, are said to have considered it as churlish to ask a stranger his name or lineage, before he had taken refreshment. Feuds were so frequent among them, that a contrary rule would in many cases have produced the discovery of some circumstance which might have excluded the guest of the benefit of the assistance he stood in need of. — SCOTT.

587. Fellest = deadliest. Notice the alliteration in this line.

591. Snowdoun. See Canto vi, 785-790.

624. Soldier, rest. This song shows Scott at his best. It is hardly surpassed even by the lyrics in Tennyson's *Princess*. He has another slumber-song, not inferior to this, entitled "Lullaby of an Infant Chief," which he wrote for Terry's dramatization of *Guy Mannering*.

657. Reveille, from the old French *reveiller*, to awake : the bugle-call for awakening soldiers. The rime in 655 shows what pronunciation Scott here desired.

666. The stranger's bed. See lines 437-438 of this Canto.

678-679. An allusion to the closing scenes in the life of James V. See the account of his death in Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*, chapter xxxviii, last paragraph (p. xxix. of this book).

704. grisly = causing terror.

729. Exiled race. For the relations between James and the Douglas, see Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*, chapter xxvi (page ix of this book); also, note to Canto ii, line 230.

This Canto is stronger in descriptive passages than in narrative, even if we acknowledge that the opening action of the stag-chase is finely told. Stanzas xi-xiv will repay close study as descriptions of natural scenery; Stanzas xvii-xix and xxi as descriptions of character. Notice that Scott's method is almost entirely *objective* : i. e. he gives the person or the place, concretely and vividly, just as it would appear to the spectator; he gives very little of the effect upon the emotions of the spectator (*subjective*).

CANTO II

15. From memory erase. Compare the second stanza of *Amiens* song, in *As You Like It*, ii, 7.

"Freeze, freeze thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot."

17. speed = success or prosperity. Correctly used in Pope's line,
Welcome the coming, speed (= prosper) the going guest,
and in the common proverb : More haste, less speed (= success).

61. A bad tautology here. Explain it.

65. *sped* = sent forth : a derivative use from that shown in line 17. See note there.

109. *Græme*. The ancient and powerful family of Graham (which, for metrical reasons, is here spelt after the Scottish pronunciation) held extensive possessions in the counties of Dumbarton and Stirling. Few families can boast of more historical renown. — SCOTT.

112. *Bower*: originally the inner or sleeping room of an English cottage, as distinguished from the *hall* or outer or living room. Secondly, *bower* = the ladies' room as distinguished from the men's (the *hall*); hence *hall* and *bower* = wherever men and women assemble.

131. *Saint Modan*. I am not prepared to show that Saint Modan was a performer on the harp. It was, however, no unsaintly accomplishment; for Saint Dunstan certainly did play upon that instrument, which retaining, as was natural, a portion of the sanctity attached to its master's character, announced future events by its spontaneous sound. — SCOTT.

141. *Bothwell's bannered hall*. The ruins of this castle may still be seen, near Glasgow.

142. *Douglases*. See the extracts from Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*, referred to in notes to Canto i, line 729.

159. *From Tweed to Spey* = from south of Scotland to north. Compare the Scriptural "from Dan to Beersheba," and the American "from Maine to Florida." See note on lines 676-678 of this canto.

170. *reave* = to take away by force.

200. *The Bleeding Heart*. The story goes that Robert Bruce, on his death-bed, charged his friend James Douglas to carry his heart to Jerusalem. Hence, the Douglases assumed a bleeding heart as their cognizance.

206. *Strathspey*: a Scottish dance.

213. *Alpine*: a mythical Highland king.

214. *Loch Lomond*. West of Loch Katrine. See map.

215. *Lennox foray*: a foray into the territory of the Lenoxes, whose estates lay south of Loch Lomond.

221. *Holy-Rood (Castle)*: the King's residence in Edinburgh.

A knight he slew. This was by no means an uncommon occurrence in the court of Scotland; nay, the presence of the sovereign himself scarcely restrained the ferocious and inveterate feuds which were the perpetual source of bloodshed among the Scottish nobility. — SCOTT.

230. *Disowned by every noble peer*. The exiled state of this powerful race is not exaggerated in this and subsequent passages. The hatred of James against the race of Douglas was so inveterate, that, numerous as their allies were, and disregarded as the regal authority had usually been in similar cases, their nearest friends, even in the most remote parts of Scotland, durst not entertain them, unless under the strictest and closest disguise. James Douglas, son of the banished Earl of Angus, afterwards well known by the title of Earl of Morton, lurked, during the exile of his family, in the north of

Scotland, under the assumed name of James Innes, otherwise *James the Griever* (i.e., Reve or Bailiff). "And as he bore the name," says Godscroft, "so did he also execute the office of a griever or overseer of the lands and rents, the corn and cattle of him with whom he lived." From the habits of frugality and observation which he acquired in his humble situation, the historian traces that intimate acquaintance with popular character, which enabled him to rise so high in the state, and that honorable economy by which he repaired and established the shattered estates of Angus and Morton. — SCOTT.

236. **Dispensation.** Ellen and Roderick were cousins: hence, according to the canons of the Catholic Church, they could not marry without a special permission from the Pope.

254. **shrouds** = covers with a shroud (garment) = shelter, with the idea of concealment. The right word in the right place.

260. **Maronnan.** The parish of Kilmarnock, at the eastern extremity of Loch Lomond, derives its name from a cell or chapel, dedicated to Saint Maronnan. — SCOTT.

270. **Bracklinn.** This is a beautiful cascade made by a mountain stream called the Keltie, at a place called the Bridge of Bracklinn, about a mile from the village of Callander. — SCOTT. See note to Canto vi, line 488.

274. **Claymore.** A large Highland sword.

303. **While** = time, from the Old English noun *hwil*, meaning a *time*.

306. **Tine-man.** Archibald, the third Earl of Douglas, was so unfortunate in all his enterprises, that he acquired the epithet of "Tine-man," because he *tined*, or lost, his followers in every battle which he fought. — SCOTT.

308. **Hotspur.** For the famous alliance between the Douglas, the Percy (Hotspur) and Glendower, see Shakespeare's Henry IV.

319. **Beltane game.** In the elaborate article on May-day in Chambers' Book of Days, occurs the following passage: "Among the barbarous Celtic populations of Europe, there was a heathen festival on the same day, but it does not seem to have been connected with flowers. It was called Beltein, and found expression in the kindling of fires on hill-tops by night. Among the peasantry of Ireland, of the Isle of Man and of the Scottish Highlands, such doings were kept up till within the recollection of living people." (1863.)

327. **Canna** = the cotton-grass, — not the semi-tropical *canna* or Indian shot. That could not grow in the latitude of Loch Katrine.

335. **Glengyle.** See map, north of Loch Katrine.

340. **Bannered Pine** = the banner of the pine; as we say, "the banner of the star." The pine was the cognizance of Roderick's clan.

351. **Chanters** = the pipes on which the melody is played.

356. **Pibroch** = the melody.

363. **Thrilling sounds.** The connoisseurs in pipe-music affect to discover in a well-composed pibroch, the imitative sounds of march, conflict, flight, pursuit and all the "current of a heady fight." — SCOTT.

For an English view of the bagpipes, read Gilbert's *Ellen McJones Aberdeen* (in the *Bab Ballads*). For the Scotch side, again, see the really pa-

thetic account of the piping-contest between Allan Breck and Robin Oig in Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, Chapter xxv.

392. **Burden** = chorus. See Canto vi, line 75.

396. **Roderigh Vich Alpine**. Besides his ordinary name and surname, which were chiefly used in the intercourse with the Lowlands, every Highland chief had an epithet expressive of his patriarchal dignity as head of the clan, and which was common to all his predecessors and successors, as Pharaoh to the kings of Egypt, or Arsaces to those of Parthia. This name was usually a patronymic, expressive of his descent from the founder of the family. . . . Besides this title, which belonged to his office and dignity, the chieftain had usually another peculiar to himself, which distinguished him from the chieftains of the same race. This was sometimes derived from complexion, as *dhu* or *roy*; sometimes from size, as *beg* or *more*; at other times, from some peculiar exploit, or from some peculiarity of habit or appearance. The line of the text therefore signifies Black Roderick, the descendant of Alpine. The song itself is intended as an imitation of the *jorrams*, or boat-songs of the Highlanders, which were usually composed in honor of a favorite chief. — SCOTT.

405. **To bourgeon** = to sprout, to blossom: a fine old word, lost to prose but preserved in poetry.

416. **Menteith**, is the watershed of the river Teith. *Breadalbane* is the country around Loch Tay, north of Loch Lomond.

419-426. All the places mentioned in these lines are near Loch Lomond.

497. **Percy's Norman pennon, won**. This occasion cannot be definitely determined, for it must be remembered that the Douglas of this poem is not an historical personage but a fictitious one, only the outlines of which were suggested to Scott by the adventures of Archibald Douglas of Kilsperdie. See the last paragraph of Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*, Chapter xxvi, (page xvi of this book).

504. **The waned crescent**. The crescent was the cognizance of Sir Walter Scott of Buccleugh. This reference will be clear upon reading that passage in the *Tales of a Grandfather* which begins at the sixth paragraph of Chapter xxvi (page x of this book).

506. **Blantyre**. "The ruins of the Priory of Blantyre, which was founded some time prior to the year 1296, are finely situated in a most retired situation, on the top of a rock which rises perpendicularly from the Clyde, exactly opposite the noble ruins of Bothwell Castle." — Fullarton, *Gazetteer of Scotland*, (1843).

507. **Bothwell**. To describe and give the history of this famous castle, would require a volume in itself. The best short account I know of is to be found in Wordsworth's *Notes to his Poems* (edition of 1839, vol. v, p. 379).

525. **Unhooded**. The head of a falcon was commonly covered with a hood: as soon as this was removed, he would fly off to hunt for game.

527. **Goddess of the wood** = Artemis (Diana).

548. **Ben Lomond**; east of Loch Lomond. See map.

574. Glenfinlas. Where is the speaker supposed to be? Follow eastward from that place and you will find the forest of Glenfinlas; southwest, to Loch Lomond, and you will find Strath-Endrick.

615-628. For the history upon which this passage is based, see the opening pages of the *Tales of a Grandfather*, Chapter xxvii, (pages xvii-xviii of this book). The places mentioned here are all near the Tweed.

638. Streight = difficulty.

652. bower = home. See note on line 112 of this canto.

678. Links. Near Stirling the river Forth is guilty of many twists or windings, locally known as *Links*. Lines 676-678 then, mean "from west to east." Compare, "From Tweed to Spey," line 159 of this canto.

679. Stirling (Castle) : a favorite residence of the Scottish Kings.

692-707. This is an excellent figure, carried out with Scott's customary clarity and more than his customary diffuseness. He certainly gets out of it all there is in it, and leaves nothing to the imagination of the reader. For an example of the opposite method, you will find it interesting to make a study of the figures in Hamlet's famous soliloquy (*Hamlet*, iii, 1).

702. Battled fence = parapet.

747. Nighted = benighted.

757. checkered shroud. This is somewhat grandiloquent for "plaid."

793-794. In such objective description as this, Scott is at his best.

804. Fell = moor. In this sense the word is provincial in the Lake District.

809. Henchman. This officer is a sort of secretary, and is to be ready, upon all occasions, to venture his life in defence of his master; and at drinking-bouts he stands behind his seat, at his haunch, from which his title is derived, and watches the conversation, to see if any one offends his patron. — SCOTT.

831. Fiery Cross. See note on line 18 of Canto iii.

847. Holds in ward. Malcolm was not of age.

The best things in this Canto are the coming of Roderick Dhu (Stanzas xvi-xviii) and the Boat-Song (xix-xx). Notice how the Song starts with the figure of the Pine and how consistently this is carried through.

CANTO III

18. Fiery Cross. When a chieftain designed to summon his clan, upon any sudden or important emergency, he slew a goat, and making a cross of any light wood, seared its extremities in the fire, and extinguished them in the blood of the animal. This was called the *Fiery Cross*, also *Cream Tarigh*, or the *Cross of Shame*, because disobedience to what the symbol implied inferred infamy. It was delivered to a swift and trusty messenger, who ran full speed with it to the next hamlet, where he presented it to the principal person, with a single word, implying the place of rendezvous. He who received the symbol was bound to send it forward, with equal dispatch, to the next village;

and thus it passed with incredible celerity through all the district which owed allegiance to the chief, and also among his allies and neighbors, if the danger was common to them. At sight of the Fiery Cross, every man, from sixteen years old to sixty, capable of bearing arms, was obliged instantly to repair, in his best arms and accoutrements, to the place of rendezvous. He who failed to appear, suffered the extremities of fire and sword, which were emblematically denounced to the disobedient by the bloody and burnt marks upon this warlike signal. During the civil war of 1745-6, the Fiery Cross often made its circuit; and upon one occasion it passed through the whole district of Breadalbane, a tract of thirty-two miles, in three hours. — SCOTT.

51. *meet* = fitting, as in Genesis ii. 18.

62. *Rowan*: the mountain ash.

71. *That monk*, etc. The state of religion in the middle ages afforded considerable facilities for those whose mode of life excluded them from regular worship, to secure, nevertheless, the ghostly assistance of confessors, perfectly willing to adapt the nature of their doctrine to the necessities and peculiar circumstances of their flock. Robin Hood, it is well known, had his celebrated domestic chaplain, Friar Tuck. — SCOTT.

74. *Benharrow*. Near Loch Lomond.

76. *Druid*. Consult the Century Dictionary.

87. *Strath* = river-valley.

92. *Fold* = sheep-fold.

102. *Bucklered* = protected by a buckler or shield.

104. *Fieldfare*: the common English thrush.

114. See note to Canto i, line 363.

138. *Sable-lettered*, or black-lettered, on account of the heavy types used.

142. *Cabala*. A Hebrew word. It signified originally the mystic interpretations that vain commentators read into the Hebrew scriptures: then, any mystic or magic doctrine.

154. *River Demon*. The River Demon, or River-horse, for it is that form which he commonly assumes, is the Kelpy of the Lowlands, an evil and malicious spirit, delighting to forebode and to witness calamity. — SCOTT.

168. *Ben-Shie*. Most great families in the Highlands were supposed to have a tutelar, or rather a domestic spirit attached to them, who took an interest in their prosperity and intimated, by its wailings, any approaching disaster. — SCOTT.

169. *Sounds*. A presage of the kind alluded to in the text, is still believed to announce death to the ancient Highland family of McLean of Loch Buy. The spirit of an ancestor slain in battle is heard to gallop along a stony bank, and then to ride thrice around the family residence, ringing his fairy bridle and thus intimating the approaching calamity. — SCOTT.

177. *(To) ban* = to curse.

189. *Cubit*. This word is very common in the 1611 version of the Bible. See, for example, Genesis vi. 15-16.

191. Inch-Cailliach. The Isle of Nuns, or of Old Women, is a most beautiful island at the lower extremity of Loch Lomond. The church belonging to the former nunnery was long used as the place of worship for the parish of Buchanan, but scarce any vestiges of it now remain. The burial ground continues to be used, and contains the family places of sepulture of several neighboring clans. The monuments of the lairds of MacGregor, and of other families, claiming a descent from the old Scottish King Alpine, are most remarkable. — SCOTT.

200. Yew-trees, on account of their sad-colored foliage, are sometimes planted in grave-yards.

212. Strook = struck. This form is an inadmissible license.

226. Scathed = (literally) injured : here it must be used to mean "burn" or "char."

243. Goshawk : originally *goose-hawk*, from being flown at geese.

253. Coir-Uriskin = Den of the wild men. In the Keltic mythology the Urisk corresponds in form to the Hellenic Satyr. See stanza xxvi of this canto.

255. Beala-nam-bo, or the pass of cattle, is a most magnificent glade, overhung with aged birch-trees, a little higher up the mountain than the Coir-nam-Uriskin. — SCOTT.

286. Lanrick-mead, near Loch Vennachar.

300. Dun deer's hide. The ancient buskin was . . . made of undressed deer's hide, with the hair outwards, — a circumstance which procured the Highlanders the well-known epithet of *Redshanks*. — SCOTT.

310. Scaur = scar = cliff, as in the name of the Yorkshire town, Scarborough.

341. Loch Achray. Between Loch Katrine and Loch Vennachar.

344. Bosky = woody.

349. Duncraggan. Near the Brigg of Turk.

369. Coronach. The Coronach of the Highlanders was a wild expression of lamentation, poured forth by the mourners over the body of a departed friend. When the words of it were articulate, they expressed the praises of the deceased, and the loss the clan would sustain by his death. — SCOTT.

386. Correi = Hollow in which game hides.

387. Cumber = Trouble, difficulty. Compare Luke x. 40: "But Martha was cumbered about much serving."

394. Stumah = The Faithful.

453. Strath-Ire. The first stage of the Fiery Cross is to Duncraggan, a place near the Brigg of Turk, where a short stream divides Loch Achray from Loch Vennachar. [From] thence, it passes towards Callander, and then, turning to the left up the pass of Leny, is consigned to Norman at the chapel of Saint Bride, which stood on a small and romantic knoll in the middle of the valley, called *Strath-Ire*. Tombea and Arnandave, or Ardmantave, are names of places in the vicinity. The alarm is then supposed to pass along

the lake of Lubnag, and through the various glens in the district of Balquidder, including the neighboring tracts of Glenfinlas and Strath-Gartney. — SCOTT.

485. Coif. See note on Canto i, line 363.

546. Bracken = fern.

570. Midnight blaze. The heath on the Scottish moorlands is often set fire to, that the sheep may have the advantage of the young herbage produced, in room of the tough old heather plants. This custom (execrated by sportsmen) produces occasionally the most beautiful nocturnal appearances, similar almost to the discharge of a volcano. This simile is not new to poetry. The charge of a warrior, in the fine ballad of Hardyknute, is said to be "like fire to heather set." — SCOTT.

577. Coil = stir, confusion.

578-582. See note on line 453 of this canto.

599. By his chieftain's hand. The deep and implicit respect paid by the Highland clansmen to their chief, rendered this both a common and a solemn oath. In other respects, they were like most savage nations, capricious in their ideas concerning the obligatory power of oaths. — SCOTT.

607-609. Rednock, Cardross, Duchray : castles.

610. Loch Con : south-west of Loch Katrine.

622. Coir-nan-Uriskin. See note on line 253 of this canto.

633. Incumbent, in the literal sense of "hanging over."

641. Still = stillness.

672. A single page. A Highland chief, being as absolute in his authority as any prince, had a corresponding number of officers attached to his person. 1. The Henchman. 2. The Bard. 3. Bladier or Spokesman. 4. Gillie-more or Sword-bearer. 5. Gillie-casflue, who carried the chief, if on foot, over the fords. 6. Gillie-constraine, who leads the chief's horse. 7. Gillie-Trushanarinsh, the Baggage-man. 8. The Piper. 9. The Piper's Gillie, or attendant who carries the bag-pipes. — SCOTT.

713. Ave Maria! = Hail, Mary! The Roman Catholic Invocation of the Virgin. See Luke i. 26-28.

In this Canto, Brian is hardly a successful character : when intended to be tragic, he is merely melodramatic. The blood of bulls and of goats, which is his stock in trade, however fascinating to Homeric Greeks and Mosaic Hebrews, is not interesting to civilized people (Stanzas i-xi). When we get to really human affairs, the Canto improves : the hurry of action, whether it be that of Malise or Angus or Norman, is given with fire and spirit (xii-xxii); the introduction of the funeral-train and the wedding procession is an excellent dramatic device, and the beautiful Ave Maria affords a peaceful closing in happy contrast to the turmoil with which the Canto opened.

CANTO IV

19. Doune (Castle), on the north bank of the Teith, not far from its junction with the Forth.

36. Boune = prepared.

63. Taghairm. The Highlanders, like all rude people, had various superstitious modes of inquiring into futurity. One of the most noted was the *Taghairm* mentioned in the text. A person was wrapped up in the skin of a newly-alain bullock, and deposited beside a waterfall, or at the bottom of a precipice, or in some other strange, wild, and unusual situation, where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation he revolved in his mind the question proposed, and whatever was impressed upon him by his exalted imagination passed for the inspiration of the disembodied spirits who haunt the desolate recesses. — SCOTT.

68. Merry-men. A dissyllable.

74. Beal 'maha. East of Loch Lomond.

77. Dennan's Row, better known as Rowardennan: the best point from which to ascend Ben Lomond.

78. Scathless = without scath or injury. Compare *scathed* in Canto iii, line 226.

84. Hero's Targe. There is a rock so named in the forest of Glenfinlas by which a tumultuary cataract takes its course. — SCOTT.

Notice how correctly the metaphor implied in *targe* is carried out in *boss* (line 82).

98. Broke. Everything belonging to the chase was matter of solemnity among our ancestors; but nothing was more so than the mode of cutting up, or, as it was technically called, *breaking* the slaughtered stag. The forester had his allotted portion; the hounds had a certain allowance; and, to make the division as general as possible, the very birds had their share also. — SCOTT.

132. Which spills. Though this be in the text described as a response of the Taghairm, or Oracle of the Hide, it was of itself an augury frequently attended to. The fate of the battle was often anticipated in the imagination of the combatants, by observing which party first shed blood. It is said that the Highlanders under Montrose were so deeply imbued with this notion, that, on the morning of the battle of Tippermoor, they murdered a defenceless herdsman, whom they found in the fields, merely to secure an advantage of so much consequence to their party. — SCOTT.

150. glaive = sword, from the Latin *gladius*.

152-153. Moray, Mar. The Earl of Moray and the Earl of Mar were commanders of King James' forces. The *star* and the *pale* mean their cognizances. *Pale* in this sense is a technical term in heraldry, and signifies a band drawn perpendicularly through the middle of the shield.

164. Trosachs' shaggy glen. This is a tautology. See note on Canto i, line 145.

174. Stance = station.

198. The red streamers of the North = the Aurora Borealis, or northern lights. Supposed to be caused by electrical discharges passing through the upper strata of our atmosphere.

217. Rife = prevailing.

223. Trowed = believed. **Aught:** an adverb.

231. Cambus-kenneth = The field of (King) Kenneth; an abbey about a mile northeast of Stirling: sometimes called The Monastery of Stirling. In 1559 the "Reformers" nearly destroyed the abbey: a few walls and a broken tower are all that remain.

261. Merry it is. This is a capital imitation of the Old English ballad, with its free measure, its alliterations and its suggestively-broken effects. Those interested in such matters should consult the learned Introduction to Gummere's Old Ballads.

262. Mavis, merle. Thrush, blackbird.

267. Wold means originally the same thing as *wood*, but by confusion of place-distinctions it has come to mean open, grazing country, as in the name *Cotswold Hills*.

277. Vest (Latin, *vestis*) = garment. **Pall**, from the Latin *palla*, means originally a mantle; then (as here) the rich cloth from which mantles were made.

285. Vair (Latin, *varius*, spotted), was a kind of fur much worn in the Middle Ages. It is supposed to have been taken from the gray squirrel.

298. Woned = dwelt. Very common in Chaucer.

306. Fatal green. As the *Daoine Shi'*, or Men of Peace, wore green habits, they were supposed to take offence when any mortals ventured to assume their favorite color. Indeed, from some reason, which has been, perhaps, originally a general superstition, *green* is held in Scotland to be unlucky to particular tribes and counties. The Caithness men, who hold this belief, allege as a reason that their bands wore that color when they were cut off at the battle of Flodden. . . . Green is also disliked by those of the name of Ogilvy, but more especially it is held fatal to the whole clan of Grahame. — SCOTT.

308. Christened man. The elves were supposed greatly to envy the privileges acquired by Christian imitation, and they gave to those mortals who had fallen into their power a certain precedence, founded upon this advantageous distinction. — SCOTT.

330. Kindly = kindred. Compare Hamlet, i, 2.

"A little more than kin and less than kind."

371. Dunfermline = The Fortified Hill of the Crooked Stream. Here was once the most magnificent abbey in Scotland: destroyed by the English in 1303. It was rebuilt, though less splendidly, and the ruins of the second structure are still among the finest in Great Britain.

387. Bourne = stream. The meaning "boundary" is a secondary one.

424. Forth it shall. To what does *it* refer?

446. As = as if.

473. Reck of = regard, think of.

506. Weeds = garments, as in the expression, "widow's weeds."

531. Allan: a Perthshire stream, noted for its picturesque scenery. It enters the Forth about two miles from Stirling.

532. Devan, commonly known as **Devon**, another tributary of the Forth, celebrated by Burns and other Scotch poets. The word *heard* refers to the cascades of the **Devon** as they roar through the chasm spanned by what is known as **The Rumbling Bridge**.

552. Bridegroom, must be accented on the second syllable to preserve the metre. If we say "bridegroom gay," no such change is needed.

555. Maudlin, is here used as a proper name. It is contracted from "Magdalen," with reference to Mary Magdalene regarded as "the penitent woman which was a sinner," and represented by painters with eyes swollen and red with weeping.

559. Bar. See Canto vi, lines 646-648.

567. Batten = fatten, as in *Hamlet*, iii, 4.

574. Been. The rime shows the common pronunciation of this word in England.

590. The toils are pitched. This song warns Fitz-James of his danger.

594. A stag of ten. Having ten branches on his antlers. — SCOTT.

618-636. This passage illustrates what we have previously noticed — that Scott is at his best when the subject calls for the objective description of action.

665-674. Foreshadows the action of the next canto.

676. Poured his eyes, seems a strained expression for "flowed his tears." We gain nothing but the weak alliteration in *poured* and *pity*.

709. Only is incorrectly placed. See also line 240 of this canto.

722. Summer solstice: when the heat of summer is greatest. Look up the etymology of *solstice*.

746. Slip (from the leash).

751. Come: an infinitive, depending upon *Let* to be supplied.

762. Hardened flesh. The Scottish Highlanders, in former times, had a concise mode of cooking their venison, or rather of dispensing with cooking it . . . [by] compressing it between two batons of wood, so as force out the blood and render it extremely hard. This they reckoned a great delicacy. — SCOTT.

787. Coilantogle, on the Teith just below Loch Vennachar.

For further illustrations of Highland hospitality, see Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, Chapters xv, xvi, xix, xxi, xxiii, xxv.

CANTO V

10. Sheen = shining.

18. Gael = Highlander. **Saxon** = Lowlander.

46. Shingles = broken stone.

54. Cumbered = encumbered. See note on Canto iii, line 387.

95. Doune. The ruins of Doune Castle, formerly the residence of the

Earls of Menteith, now the property of the Earl of Moray, are situated at the confluence of the Ardoch and the Teith. — SCOTT.

See line 492 of this canto.

108. Regent: John Stewart, Duke of Albany, a relative of the young King's.

119. Holy-Rood. See note on canto ii, line 221.

125. Truncheon = literally something cut off: hence, a cudgel; then, from days when Might was Right, a staff that merely symbolized authority instead of beating it in.

127. Stranger to respect. There is scarcely a more disorderly period in Scottish history than that which succeeded the battle of Flodden and occupied the minority of James V. — SCOTT.

169. Seek other cause. So far, indeed, was a *Creagh*, or foray, from being held disgraceful, that a young chief was always expected to show his talents for command, so soon as he assumed it, by leading his clan on a successful enterprise of this nature, either against a neighboring sept, for which constant feuds usually furnished an apology, or against the Saxons, or Lowlanders, for which no apology was necessary. The Gael, great traditional historians, never forgot that the Lowlands had, at some remote period, been the property of their Celtic forefathers, which furnished an ample vindication of all the ravages that they could make on the unfortunate districts which lay within their reach. — SCOTT.

By "great traditional historians" Scott means, "historians great in tradition."

196-227. This passage is highly dramatic, its force lying in suspense and surprise.

234-239. A famous passage. Dr. Johnson has the same simile expressed in a citified way. When some one asked him how he felt after the failure of his play, he replied: "Like the Monument."

253. Jack. A cheap coat-of-armor worn by footsoldiers. This word is probably derived from the proper name, *Jack*. See the Century Dictionary, if you are interested in the twenty-one principal and innumerable secondary meanings of *Jack*.

262. That I need not say. Because I know that you are brave.

270. Only meant. The order of these words should be inverted.

273. Without a pass from Roderick Dhu. This incident, like some other passages in the poem, illustrative of the character of the ancient Gael, is not imaginary, but borrowed from fact. The Highlanders, with the inconsistency of most nations in the same state, were alternately capable of great exertions of generosity, and of cruel revenge and perfidy. — SCOTT.

277. Wont = customary.

298. Three mighty lakes. The torrent which discharges itself from Loch Vennachar, the lowest and eastmost of the three lakes which form the scenery adjoining to the Trosachs, sweeps through a flat and extensive moor called Bochastle. Upon a small eminence called the *Dun* of Bochastle, and,

indeed, on the plain itself, are some intrenchments which have been thought Roman. — SCOTT.

324. meed = reward.

356. Carpet knight: one who prefers the carpets of palaces to the dust of the battle-field.

364. Ruth = pity.

380. His targe he threw, etc. A round target of light wood, covered with strong leather, and studded with brass or iron, was a necessary part of a Highlander's equipment. In charging regular troops, they received the thrust of the bayonet in this buckler, twisted it aside, and used the broadsword against the encumbered soldier. A person thus armed had a considerable advantage in private fray. — SCOTT.

383. Trained abroad. French officers were long recognized as the best fencers in Europe.

395. Firm rock or castle-roof. The idea of fixity connoted by these words does not go well with that of violent motion which characterizes the scene as a whole.

462. A fairer freight: Ellen.

488. This line locates, with sufficient exactness, the places mentioned in those that follow. For *Doune*, see note on line 95 of this canto.

504. Stirling. "The glory of Scotland . . . who does not know its noble rock, rising the monarch of the landscape, its majestic and picturesque towers, its amphitheatre of mountain and the windings of its marvellous river: and who that has once seen the sun descending here, in all the blaze of its beauty beyond the purple hills of the west, can ever forget the plain of Stirling, the endless charm of this wonderful scene, the wealth, the splendor, the variety, the majesty of all which here lies between earth and heaven." — Macculloch quoted in Fullarton's *Gazetteer of Scotland*.

525. Saint Serle. This gentleman looks as if he had been invented by Scott to rhyme with *Earl*.

532. Postern = rear.

544. Bride of Heaven = a nun.

550. Douglas. The fate of William, eighth Earl of Douglas, whom James II. stabbed in Stirling Castle with his own hand, and while under his royal safe conduct, is familiar to all who read Scottish history. — SCOTT.

551. Mound. An eminence on the northeast of the Stirling Castle where state criminals were executed. — SCOTT.

558. Franciscan steeple = Grayfriars' Church. The Franciscans were a monastic order founded by St. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226).

562. Morrice (or Moorish) dancers. For a spirited description by Scott of such revelers, see *The Abbot*, chapter xiv.

564. Sports. Every burgh of Scotland of the least note, but more especially the considerable towns, had their solemn *play*, or festival, when feats of archery were exhibited, and prizes distributed to those who excelled in

wrestling, hurling the bar, and the other gymnastic exercises of the period. Stirling, a usual place of royal residence, was not likely to be deficient in pomp upon such occasions, especially since James V. was very partial to them. His ready participation in these popular amusements was one cause of his acquiring the title of King of the Commons. . . . The usual prize to the best shooter was a silver arrow. — SCOTT.

572. **Stark** = strong. The original meaning is "stiff" or "rigid." The association with death, as in the expression "stark dead," comes from the idea of rigidity.

597. **Brooked** = endured.

605-608. Try the effect of singular pronouns in this passage, and see if they do not improve it.

610. **checkered** = clad in motley, or in checker-board pattern cloth.

611. **Morricers** = Morris dancers.

613. **Butts** = targets.

614. **Robin Hood**. The exhibition of this renowned outlaw and his band, was a favorite frolic at such festivals as we are describing. This sporting, in which kings did not disdain to be actors, was prohibited in Scotland upon the Reformation. — SCOTT.

Scott did not write *Ivanhoe* till ten years after he had written *The Lady of the Lake*, or he might have referred us to his own highly colored pictures of the outlaws.

615. **quarterstaff**. A stout pole about six feet long : a favorite weapon in the rough games of English yeomen.

630. **Wight** = fellow.

641. **Ring**. The usual prize of a wrestling was a ram and a ring, but the animal would have embarrassed my story. — SCOTT.

648. **The massive bar**. Compare canto iv, line 559.

653. **Rood** : a variable measure of length : perhaps six or seven yards.

657. **Douglas**. What part of speech ?

660. **Ladies' Rock**. Whence the ladies viewed the sports.

722-727. This could hardly have been put more strongly, or more picturesquely.

729. **Amain** = With violence.

740. **Misproud** = wrongly proud.

747. **Ward** = Confinement.

773. **Faalty** = Loyalty.

786. **Should dread**. What is the object ?

790. **Widow's mate**. So long as a widow has a mate, she is not a widow. See if you can express what is evidently the thought, logically and metrically.

794. **Ward** = ward off.

810. **Trailing arms** ; as at a military funeral.

818-835. This distich is worthy of Coriolanus, — the most eloquent exponent of Shakespeare's habitual contempt for the mob.

837. This line is an excellent example of that difference between poetic and prose diction, which Wordsworth said does not exist. *Spurs hitherwards his panting steed*, in prose would be, "Rides fast this way." That is the way Wordsworth would have written it: would it have been so effective as Scott's? If not, why not?

882. *Jar* = war.

886. *Pent* = confined.

887. Earl William (Douglas). Stabbed by James II. in Stirling Castle.

891-899. Foreshadows the action of the next Canto.

Stanza xiv-xxi. This, it seems to me, is the best described fight in fiction or in history. Dumas Père (*The Breakfast at the Bastion*, in *The Three Musketeers*) comes next, but he has not so quick an eye as has Scott for objective detail, nor is his coloring so poetical.

No epic poem seems complete without an account of Games. Compare Homer (Pope's Translation), *Iliad* xxiii; Vergil (Conington's Translation), *Æneid*, v; Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ii, 506-569.

CANTO VI

9. Kind nurse. Compare the famous apostrophe to Sleep in a Henry IV. iii. 1.

32. *Stern* = violent. This use of *stern* is obsolete.

42. *Harness* = armor.

47. Adventurers. The Scottish armies consisted chiefly of the nobility and barons, with their vassals, who held lands under them for military service by themselves and their tenants. The patriarchal influence exercised by the heads of clans in the Highlands and Borders was of a different nature, and sometimes at variance with feudal principles. It flowed from the *Patria Potestas*, exercised by the chieftain as representing the original father of the whole name, and was often obeyed in contradiction to the feudal superior. James V. seems first to have introduced, in addition to the militia furnished from these sources, the service of a small number of mercenaries, who formed a body-guard, called the Foot-Band. — SCOTT.

60. Halberd. "A broad blade with sharp edges ending in a sharp point, mounted on a handle five to seven feet long." — Century Dictionary.

63. Holytide = Holy time. This use of *tide*, though once common, is now confined to poetry. Compare the opening line of Lyte's well-known hymn:

"Abide with me: fast falls the eventide."

75. Burden = chorus. Compare canto ii, line 392.

78. Trent. A river in eastern England, flowing through Nottingham and Lincoln.

81. Host = army. This is the oldest meaning of the word.

87. **Troll** = sing jovially. "Troll" and "roll" are etymologically connected.

88. **Buxom** = lively. Look up the etymology.

89-107. The Soldier's Song that occupies these lines is not worth printing.

128. **Wax** = grow, as in Watts' line,

"Till moons shall wax and wane no more."

129. **Glee-maiden**. The *jongleurs*, or jugglers, as we learn from the elaborate work of the late Mr. Strutt, on the sports and pastimes of the people of England, used to call in the aid of various assistants, to render these performances as captivating as possible. The glee-maiden was a necessary attendant. Her duty was tumbling and dancing; and therefore the Anglo-Saxon version of Saint Mark's Gospel states Herodias to have vaulted or tumbled before King Herod. In Scotland these poor creatures seem, even at a late period, to have been bondswomen to their masters. — SCOTT.

152. **Tartan screen** = the plaid with which she had covered her face.

170. **Needwood**. A forest in Staffordshire. See lines 265-267.

178. **Part** = act.

183. **Tullibardine**. The home of the "proud Murrays." About twenty miles from Stirling.

218. **Bower** = inner room. See note on canto ii, line 112.

222. **You the way**. Which is direct object and which indirect?

227. **Guerdon** = reward: present.

232. **Part**. See note on line 178 of this canto.

234. **Barret-cap**. The word *barret* (Latin, *birrus* = hood or cape) itself means "cap." Compare "*biretta*," the name for a priest's cap.

241. **My lady (being) safe**. A nominative absolute. Consult your grammar.

242. **Master**. Douglas.

287. **Security**. This is much weaker than *gloom*. Why?

290. **Garniture** = furnishings.

295. **Leech** = physician. This is the original meaning of the word.

297. Foreshadowing a happy outcome to the story.

305. **Deemed**. Supply *him*. In this sentence the pronouns are awkwardly handled.

306. **Prone** = prow or bow.

309. **Astrand**. The *a* in this word is a shortening of *on*, as in "a-shore," "a-foot."

319. **Thy lady**. Ellen is first in his thoughts. Is this natural?

336. **Pine**. See canto ii, lines 399-438.

348. **Strike it**. There are several instances, at least in tradition, of

persons so much attached to particular tunes, as to require to hear them on their death-beds. . . . It is popularly told of a famous free-booter that he composed the tune known by the name of Macpherson's Rant while under sentence of death and played it at the gallows' tree. Some spirited words have been adapted to it by Burns. — SCOTT.

365. *Shallop* : a little boat.

369. *Beal'an Duine*. A skirmish actually took place at a pass thus called in the Trosachs, and closed with the remarkable incident mentioned in the text. It was greatly posterior in date to the reign of James V." — SCOTT.

377. *Erne* = eagle.

396. *Boune* = ready.

404. *Barded* = armored.

405. *Battalia* = army.

414. *Vaward* = vanward = in the (ad)-vance.

426. *Dive*. A good example of the picture that may lie in the verb. The archer-men disappear in the blackness of the pass as suddenly and completely as the diver disappears in the water. Compare also *maddening*, line 438.

429. *As* = as if.

442. It refers to *wood* in the next line. A device to save the rime. See also line 691 of this canto.

452. *Tinchel*. A circle of sportsmen, by surrounding a great space, and gradually narrowing, brought immense quantities of deer together, which usually made desperate efforts to break through the *Tinchel*. — SCOTT.

455-461. A passage that admirably fulfils the Miltonic requirements for poetry : that it shall be simple, sensuous and passionate.

488. *Linn*, here = cataract. In canto i, line 71, *Linn* = pool. See also canto ii, line 270.

539. *Bonnet pieces*. Gold pieces on which were stamped the head of King James wearing a bonnet (cap).

545. *Casque* = helmet. *Corslet* : chest-armor.

553. *Riven* = pierced.

565. *Duncraggan's widowed dame*. See canto iii, lines 428-451.

576. *Elemental rage* = the raging of the elements.

586. *Bothwell's lord* = Douglas.

591. *Brooked* = endured.

610. *Breadalbane*. See note on canto ii, line 416.

611. *Requiem* : a prayer for the dead. So called from the opening words of the service used in the Roman Catholic Church : *Requiem aeterna dona eis* (Rest eternal give unto them).

632. *She* = Ellen.

638. **Storied pane** = Windows on which scenes (stories) were painted. Compare Milton's

" . . . storied windows richly light."

Il Penseroso, 159.

668. **Thrall** = bondage. *Captive thrall* is a tautology.

672. **Meet** = fitting. Compare Genesis ii, 18.

678. **Ring : sing.** Infinitives, depending on *wont*.

691. **It.** See note on line 442 of this canto.

707. **Prime** is strictly speaking an ecclesiastical term meaning the first twelfth of the time between sunrise and sunset. Scott uses it very loosely here.

712. **Stayed** = supported.

726. **Presence** = presence-chamber.

740. **Snowdoun's Knight.** This discovery will probably remind the reader of the beautiful Arabian tale of *Il Bondocani*. Yet the incident is not borrowed from that elegant story, but from Scottish tradition. James V., of whom we are treating, was a monarch whose good and benevolent intentions often rendered his romantic freaks venial, if not respectable, since, from his anxious attention to the interests of the lower and most oppressed class of his subjects, he was, as we have seen, popularly termed the *King of the Commons*. For the purpose of seeing that justice was regularly administered, and frequently from the less justifiable motive of gallantry, he used to traverse the vicinage of his several palaces in various disguises. The two excellent comic songs entitled *The Gaberlunnie Man* and *We'll gat nae mair a rowing* are said to have been founded upon the success of his amorous adventures when travelling in the disguise of a beggar. The latter is perhaps the best comic ballad in any language. — SCOTT.

741. **As wreath of snow.** This is the most beautiful simile in the poem and would hardly have occurred to any but a Northern man.

782. **Proselyte** = convert.

784. **Speed** = good issue.

789. **Snowdoun.** See canto i, line 591.

802. **Talisman** = charm. This word has a curious etymology.

813. **Grace** = pardon.

828. Malcolm Graeme has too insignificant a part assigned him, considering the favor in which he is held both by Ellen and the author; and in bringing out the shaded and imperfect character of Roderick Dhu as a contrast to the purer virtue of his rival, Mr. Scott seems to have fallen into the common error of making him more interesting than him whose virtues he was intended to set off, and converted the villain of the piece in some measure into its hero.

• A modern poet, however, may perhaps be pardoned for an error of which Milton himself is thought not to have kept clear, and for which there seems so natural a cause in the difference between poetical and amiable characters.

— JEFFREY.

830-837. Notice the artful suspense of this passage.

842. Harp of the North. Compare the opening stanzas of the poem and the contrasts in setting.

846. Fountain: Breeze. Indirect objects of *lending*.

854. May cavi. What is the subject?

862. Seraph = angel. A Hebrew word.

In the first part of this Canto, the action is managed less skilfully than in any other part of the story. The Guard-Room Episode (stanzas i-xi), is neither interesting nor necessary: it puts off unduly the recital of the battle (xv-xxi) which, in turn, coming where it does, distracts our attention from him who here carries our sympathy (Roderick Dhu). But no one can deny that the conclusion is admirably turned and that it satisfies our sense of poetic justice.



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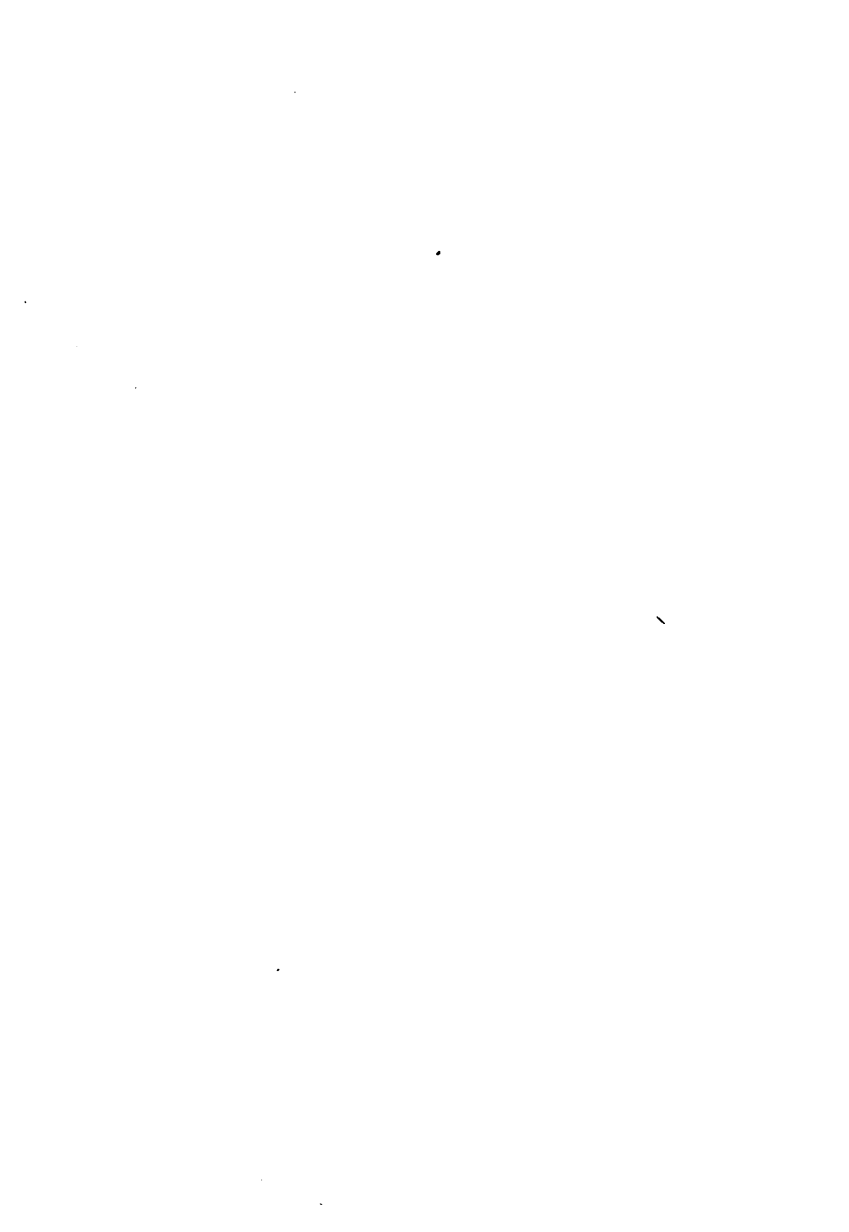
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